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The Mosaic Law In Modern Life

Decalogue

CLELAND BOYD McAFEE
Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn

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The Mosaic Law in Modern Life

I

THE RELATION OF THE LAW TO LIFE

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.—EXODUS 20 : 1, 2.

THAT grounds the law of God on the right of God. By it you are rid of arbitrariness. Here is no lightning out of a clear sky. Here is no loud voiced Despot saying, Thou shalt and Thou shalt not, by sheer force of might. The law of God issues from the right of God. The duty of man and the will of God are one fact seen from below and above. Seen as sometimes cloud is seen, dark and forbidding below, but surely sun-lit and beautiful above.

You remember that mighty hall which Merlin built for Arthur long ago. All the sacred mount of Camelot rose to it, spire after spire, tower after tower. There were four great zones of sculpture girding it round. In the first were beasts slaying

men, in the second, men slaying beasts, in the third were warriors, perfect men, and in the fourth were men growing wings. But over all was one statue of the King, so high, so bright against the sky that at sunrise the people in the far fields, so often wasted by the heathen hordes, could behold it and cry, "We have still a king." They are the ages of men cut in sculpture. Mastered first by beasts, then becoming master of the beasts, then ruler of his own kind as warriors rule their fellows, then mastering the universe as angels rise above the things that hold down us men of earth. But all the while, over all, however wings may grow, and as the climax of the whole, the Figure which leads all men to say, "We have still a King." We do not outgrow Sinai, because we do not outgrow God. And the right which God had in Israel He has not lost with men of our day. He said to Israel, "You are freemen by My hand, brought out of the bondage of Egypt by My power; hear the voice of your King; heed His law." Speaking across the generations the voice comes to ourselves, You are freemen, too; not the creatures of a day and not puppets of fate or fortune. Like a greater Israel, you have been made free; it is your heritage from God.

"And He that looketh wide and high,
Nor pauses in His plan,
Will take the sun out of the sky,
Ere freedom out of man."

But freedom finds its fulfillment in obedience. As life rises zone by zone from the brute power to the angel host, it only comes nearer to the Sovereign whose word is law of life. Sinai is no mere bit of history slipped into our books. Sinai is the age-long fact of God's right to speak to men and to be heeded. The word slips out of the past tense, says no longer, "God spake all these words," says here and now and wherever men are, "God speaks these words" of command and sovereignty.

"Daily with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not;
Over our manhood bend the skies;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies,
With our faint hearts the mountain strives."

The scene at Sinai was a culmination and a beginning—the gathering together into one great scene of the forces of history and making them a force in the years yet to come. Because of what has been, the Voice said, Be this and Do that.

There are two special reasons for calling men to the study of the Sinai law, the law of our own

day once it is read in the light of the gospel. For one thing, the minds of thoughtful men are turning more and more to the ethical import of life. In the department of social and political thought the strongest and most marked element is the ethical one. We are not content with being told what are the facts. We are demanding to know whether the facts ought to be as they are. You say, This is the fact; very well, I will not dispute that, but now tell me whether we may not be to blame that the fact is this, and whether we may have a hand in making other facts that will be what the facts ought to be. You say that in the grind of competition, it is necessary that men be ground to powder if they cannot keep out of the way. Very well, let that be true, but tell us this also, ought that to be true? Are there elements which we have been leaving out of commercial life, or of business life, which we may now put in? It is no time for denunciation. Most of our evils we have inherited; we cannot blame ourselves with their existence. But may we not be to blame for their continuance? May it not be a curse upon us if our children inherit them? It is no time for day-dreaming, for figuring up possible or impossible Utopias. It is a time for turning to the grave deep question of

the thing that ought to be. "That ought to be" —it is a weighty word that "ought." Whoever first said it, it is true that if we could put all the words of all other languages and our own into one pan of the scale, and this word "ought" in the other, they would kick the beam. We make no more momentous inquiry than this: What ought to be? And we get our answer from the ruling of God.

Therein lies one of the perils of present thought. Concerned with the meaning of duty, we find it easy to leave out the source of duty. We have even come upon times when we may speak of religion and leave God out. We describe men who think naught of God, but who do this kind thing or that, and say, "If any one is a Christian, he is one," though he may have no thought of God and no love for Christ. From across the sea Tolstoi sends us his definition of religion as the new relation of man to the world about him. From our own side of the sea, men speak of the peril of belief in God or warn us that we are not to be concerned with duty to Him, but with duty to our fellows.

Interested in matters of duty, we are yet in danger of forgetting whence duty issues. Until we read human duty in terms of the will of God we

have not read it finally or fairly. We are seeking to come into the line of the best thinking of our own times when we reassure ourselves of the intent and power of the ten commandments as the clearest statement of the moral law, and seeking to hold ourselves to the deepest truth in that thinking when we declare that the moral law is the voice of God calling men to duty.

Another reason for the study lies in current conditions. It is time the thought of men who wish to influence their fellows for right turns to this law. We are under the sway of many other motives than this of obedience to duty. At this distance we are reaping the fruits of the teaching of years in schools beyond seas and here. The philosophy of recent years has lost its rigour; in its effort to be empirical and to grow up in some natural way out of the common life of men it has gone weak. We have suffered from a wide-spread teaching that the true motives of life are pleasure and pain motives, that on the whole men act as they think will be best for them; no man deliberately chooses a thing which he thinks will bring him pain; the goal of life is happiness. We have been told that this is the reason our fathers spent so much thought on heaven. They have been accused of teaching us that the main

thing is to get to heaven, whoever and whatever you are in this life. Now, of course, the fathers did not teach any such doctrine, but if they had it would be of a piece with the teaching of much philosophy of later years. It, to be sure, says nothing about the future happiness, but it makes out a very plausible case that the real aim in life is happiness. It has been counted the spinning of cobwebs to say that a man ought to do his duty, ought to obey a law implanted within him by God, revealed to him by the Scripture. And through this process, beginning at the top of our civilization, we have come to the point where the sanctions of the law are not regarded. It is not enough for us that the law of the land requires or forbids a thing. Law as law means little to us, means nothing to a great many men. And until it does come to mean much to us, until we leave off the feeling that we are final judges for ourselves of what we ought to be and do, until we leave off the feeling that no one has right to tell us Thou shalt and Thou shalt not, and come into the feeling that it is man's first duty to do the will of God, we have not come into safe position. It is time we harked back to the teaching of Christ when the young man came to Him seeking eternal life: "If thou wouldst

enter into life, keep the commandments." If we can follow him and claim to have obeyed them, we shall do well, but even then there will come to us a revealing test, which will show us how their deeper, truest meaning has not been obeyed.

For these commandments do not come to us as the harsh mandate of a power that must be obeyed. ~~So much our freedom assures.~~ They come to us as the promise of life. There is no full, rich life without obedience to them. If they restrain us, it is that we may not run on to wreck. That is the moral of the wreck of the *Mariposa*. Setting out from a Canadian port one day, the vessel outsailed all that started with her. The heavy fog settled down. Vessels of other lines reduced their speed under order of their masters, while the *Mariposa* steamed ahead at full speed. Let others slow down for the fog; here was one vessel with a brave master. In the gray morning, as the steamers slowly crept out to sea, there suddenly came out of the fog a small boat with rowers calling for help, and the slow-going, ruled, restrained vessel crept as near as she could to the hull of the *Mariposa*, wrecked on the rocks, and rescued her passengers from the waves. We speak of self-mastery, and much that we mean by it is well meant, but much of it

is big with peril. A mastery that falls short of a divine mastery will not be a safe nor lasting one. Until we hear the voice of God in our duty and do it as unto Him, we are not safely in the path of duty. Every man needs to slow down for the fog. Steaming ahead for our own ends, taking commands from ourselves, letting ourselves loose to run as we will—there is wreck in that.

It cannot be said too many times that the only safe democracy is a theocracy, wherein every man counts himself a subject of the kingdom of heaven. Until we get such a democracy, we shall find our civil laws hard to enforce. We shall have men saying, and saying truthfully, that the churches are not wielding the influence they ought to wield, and that the moral atmosphere is enervating. The law of the land rules us from without; the law of the moral world rules us from within, each of us commanded by God. It was Kant who put the two together so well for us, when he declared that two things filled him with awe—the starry heavens above and the moral law within. One is the voice of God speaking to us from without; the other is that voice speaking from within. The voice is one voice, but it must be heard as the voice of God before we shall obey it as we ought. And the laws of men which

attempt to interpret the law of God are poor makeshifts for the inner law itself, which was voiced at Sinai, but which was written on the heart of man before the multitude of Israel heard it. There has recently come to light a word of our gentle Whittier which flashes the whole truth before us. He speaks what we all feel of joy that the human side of life has been so altered and sweetened, sees as we see that the world is growing better, because sweeter and tenderer. He points out the change in our civil codes, that the law of revenge is no longer there, that eye for eye and tooth for tooth is not the rule of living with us. All that is well. But he could not be fair to the times, as we cannot, without sounding the word of warning that all the more for our amiable tenderness do we need the counterpoise of a strong sense of justice. It is Whittier-like to say :—"It is well for us that we have learned to listen to the persuasions of the Beatitudes, but there are crises in all lives which require the emphatic Thou Shalt Not of the Decalogue." I am only seeing what any man sees when I say that such a time is on us now. Not that we have been growing worse with the years, but that as we have risen in power and opportunity we have been beclouding the law by

which we rose. The emphatic Thou Shalt Not of the Decalogue has brought us into reach of the persuasions of the Beatitudes, but it has not rid us of the necessity for the emphasis of its own commands. We are always in danger of becoming lawless through the development of self-control, and then there come times of such need that we are turned back to the true lawgiver. It is time to give God the reins. Time to do it in the large way, time to do it in the personal life. The run-away of self-seeking is on us; we want our own way and chafe at law. Our safety lies in giving Him the reins, in finding in His law the rule of life. We want no ancient Jewish law; we want something which God spake, God who has right to speak.

It surprises some men that the ten commandments are so completely negative in their form. Except the fifth, and at first glance the fourth, not one is frankly affirmative. Thou shalt not, Thou shalt not—that is the constant refrain. Ah, yes, and therein they are true to life. Every one in its heart involves positive command, that of course you see. If there is to be no god before Him, then He is to occupy the whole temple of the worshipper. If we must not steal, it is that we shall regard the rights of our fellows. If we

must not covet, it is that we may wish our fellows well and be content in our lot. And yet it is strongly true to life that the form should be negative. It is a frank recognition of that which we need no book to teach us, that we are perverse and quick to stray. The moral law, the decalogue, stands as a great spiked fence of God to shut us in from our wanderings, and is there because it is sure that we will seek to stray. In the books of theology they call it original sin. Some call it one thing and some another, but it means perversity, means self-assertion, and we would be strangely blind if we did not see it.

But the law does not come merely to hold us in. It comes as safeguard and protection for our lives, to keep us out of that which would ruin us. It was so that Moses thought of the law. Years after Sinai had become only a memory to him, he did not mistake its meaning. In that beautiful farewell address which he made to his people, he said of the whole scene:—"In His right hand was a fiery law for them," and at once he adds, that no man may mistake its purpose, "Yea, He loved the people." The law of Sinai was the love of God framed in ten words. Look closely and steadily upon the law and you will see it radiant with the gospel. Sinai is Calvary fifteen cen-

turies early. It is hard and forbidding, because we are rebellious and self-assertive. But there is in it the infinite love of God and there is naught else in it. By it He would hold us back from our own ruin.

Note the traits of this moral law. See that it appeals first of all to the individual: Thou, not Ye. It singles men out. It uses no plurals. It is we who pluralize the law. It is we who say what "all men" ought to do. The law itself says, Thou, singles us out, bids us obey. And even when the law of God addresses itself to a nation it is as one great life which must be controlled. We are told that corporations have no souls, and that therefore the moral law does not apply to them. No, it does not. It applies only to the men who make up the corporations. Your machine has no soul, and the law does not forbid it to kill, but if the child runs in the way of the machine and the man who controls it does not stay its course, the moral law is outraged. And all our talk of the soulless corporations is beside the mark, for the men who are the corporations are not soulless, and whether the civil law can reach them, the unerring hand of God can reach them. We are glib with our word of what "people" ought to do. We know that "citi-

zens" ought to pay their taxes. We have no difficulty in saying that "Christians" ought to be loyal to the Church of Christ. We consider it "every man's" duty to help forward the good works of the State and Church as far as he has power. Speak in those broad, impersonal, plural ways, and we have no argument and no hesitation. But the moral law does not speak so. It says Thou. Every man ought to pay his taxes; then I ought. And I am not exempted by anything that would not exempt any other man. Every Christian ought to be loyal to the Church; then I have no right to take any relation to the Church which any other Christian may not fairly take. Men ought to be honest; then I ought to be. And if it could be proved that the universal law has no validity, the personal law would be as valid. Whether you hear the moral law or not, it speaks to me—so every man must say. We are constantly being swallowed up in the bigness of our nation. We cannot see the trees for the wood. We cannot see the men for the multitude. We sit beside David, when the prophet comes in to tell of the wrong of another than ourselves. Our souls rebel within us. We are splendidly indignant. Our eyes flash fire against the evil that has been done. But the prophet of God

levels finger at us, and says: Thou art the man, and we cower and shrink, for the law which we have pluralized so easily and at such little cost has swung out before us into God's singular number. Where we said They and He, God said Thou. There is vast discomfort in such a word. It is true to life, this supposed jest we have been reading lately, in which a wife asks her husband on Sabbath afternoon what particular fault of his the preacher dealt with this morning, and when he asks why, answers that he has been unbearably cross ever since the service of the morning. The sun which sends its rays revealingly into the whole heavens sends its ray to each of us. And the law which deals with the duty of men is the law which deals with our duty —yours, mine.

But while it makes appeal to the individual, it makes its appeal to all individuals alike. The Jews fancied that "the souls of all Jews even yet unborn were summoned to Sinai in their numbers numberless" to hear this code of law; so that in the East to this day when a Jew is indignant over the imputation of a wrong, he exclaims: "My soul, too, has been on Sinai!" Ah, yes, and every soul has been on Sinai. The voice that speaks to me is the voice that speaks to you. I

may know the moral law that governs you by finding what is written on my own heart. That gives us right to judge the deeds of others as every honest man must judge them. It is a strange misreading of our Lord's word, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," which lets a man think he must be invertebrate in passing judgment on the deeds of his fellows. What He teaches is that when we pass judgment on our fellows, it must be on principles which we are ready to have applied to our own lives. We are to condemn others only when we are ready to be condemned for the same offense. We are to praise ourselves only when we are ready to praise others for the same act. With what judgment we judge, we shall be judged. That is fair. Recall that story of the woman taken in sin and brought for judgment to the Master. The Revision omits the whole narrative, but it is another of those stories which may not have happened, but which are true. It was the chance for a right royal indignation, and they were using it to the utmost. The Master heard the story, grieving and sad. Then His eye swept over the company, self-righteous men, gloating over their sight of lost virtue, read them through and through, saw the shrinking, broken, repent-

ant sinner, remembered and honoured the law which punished such offense with stoning—all that in an instant. And when He had seen each face there, and every man had seen himself in the light of that gaze, He stooped down and wrote we know not what on the ground, saying, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her." Wrote on, wrote on, and no stone came whistling through the air, no cry of pain from a bleeding victim of her own sin. Then He looked up. Only the repentant sinner was there; accusers had slunk away, shrinking from the sight of their own sin, unwilling to be judged as they were judging. The oldest who knew their hearts best had gone first. Ah, how many tongues would be stricken dumb as they tattle their little tales of scandal and rebuke, if they but knew that the law they use for judging others shall yet be the law by which they shall be judged! How many who love to assume great virtues and condemn others before their fellows would quail before the revealing glance of Jesus Christ! We know not what He wrote. Perhaps He wrote her sentence of condemnation in the dust and saw the wind efface it as His look had effaced their self-approval.

This is the meaning of His word of judging.

Let that sentence fall on your own head which you pass on another. Shall I see men steal and reserve my judgment? Shall I hear men take in vain the name of God and smile in hope that they have done no wrong? Shall I see men violate the purity of homes and meekly say, "Far be it from me to judge another," as though perhaps for him it might not be wrong. In God's name, no. Let me instead realize that the law which binds me to God is the law which binds him to God. Let me pass on him the judgment which he shall pass on me when I have committed his offence. Let me not condemn him, and hope for immunity myself. It is a law for me, but it is a law for all men like me.

It is common to say, "Every man for himself. If I want to do this or that, what is it to you? You do not care to do it; very well, then do not, but do not intrude your thoughts on me. If I choose to do this, it is my business, and you have no right to object. If I and forty others choose to conduct a prize fight, you need not come; stay away, if you wish, but keep your objection for your own case, and let us have our way. Mind your own business and let us mind ours." It is plausible talk; it is not argument. It forgets that we are all bound in the one bundle of life.

The thing that brutalizes the nation brutalizes the people who resist it. You cannot have prize fights without lowering the tone of the nation. You cannot run a gambling den without letting loose its evil influences far beyond the circle of those who gamble to-day. How did the spirit of unrest among so many of our boys and young men originate? What explains the spread of gambling in offices, on the street, among our women's card clubs? Why are men demanding that every man who handles money must be so heavily bonded? Somewhere there has been an evil influence at work. The law cannot reach the heart of it. It lies too deep for that. But the law may control the actions of men who are willing to have their whole moral tone lowered, may control that action in the interest of men whose lives are bound in the same bundle with them. Every man who does a wrong helps to make it easier for another man to do it, helps to make it harder for every other man to resist it, helps to make it harder for every other man to be the man he ought to be. Such talk forgets, also, that men do have the right to condemn other men for wrong-doing. We should be rendered imbecile if we should say: "I do not know whether it is wrong for him to steal or not; all I

know is that it is wrong for me." The very fact that you know it is wrong for you makes you know it is wrong for him. There are acts which differ for different persons. There are grave questions of motive that must determine our judgment. While we are ignorant of the motive, we may need to reserve our judgment. But these are not the offences against the law of moral life. There are no good motives for stealing. There are no good reasons for profane language. There is nothing that excuses bearing false witness. Once we know those offences, we become foolish if we seek to reserve our judgment. We know the man who committed them violated the law of his moral life, the law of God, and we can approve or we can reserve our judgment only at cost to our own morality.

See this third fact about the moral law, that while it controls the outer life, it makes direct appeal to the inner life. The decalogue begins with a purely inner fact and ends with one. They are commandments which may be violated throughout the whole life of a man, without coming once into his outer life. Each of the commandments has an inner meaning. Jesus read that meaning for us and made it plain that not one of them may be kept in the outer life alone.

I may not take your money; yet I may steal. I may never warm my hand in your blood, yet my heart may make me a murderer. I may never unsettle you from your possessions or your happiness, yet I may covet all that you have. I may not declare my faith in another God; I may bow my knees before the shrine of the one true God, and be an idolater and a hater of God. All this because the moral law appeals to the inner life. It is not so with the civil law. That deals with the outer life, and only slightly with the inner. It asks my motive that it may judge my deed, but it must often go blindly on its way. The civil law may stand ready to strike a thought when it puts its head out of the door of the heart, but so long as it stays inside civil law cannot reach it. Every man has right of eminent domain in his own heart. There is no search warrant strong enough nor absolute enough to get at his thoughts there. I may think my libel as I please, may think my false witness against you as I will, so far as civil law can go—if I keep it in. But the moral law, this law of God, asks me no questions of bolts or doors, comes into my heart and searches its darkest corner, and though I hide my sin where I can scarce see it myself, there the moral law finds it and routs it out to judgment.

And if it were given the place of rule in my life, civil law would be of no concern to me. There would be no evil thought which might break out through the door of my heart and need the strong hand of the law to check it or punish it. Whatever the police force of a city may do, and it might do vastly more in any city than it does, its work is the surface work. It can only warn men against letting out the evil which some power ought to hinder their having in their heart at all. The civil law tells a man, "If you do this thing, you shall be punished; therefore do not do it." The moral law bids him thwart his whole desire to do the thing. So long as men have wrong desires, they will do wrong things. The only deep and radical cure is to throttle those desires until they die.

Mark this further trait—the moral law makes no provision for its own violation. It has no offer of pardon. It does not hold out hope to any man. There are no penalties attached which make it possible for man to escape. It says Thou shalt not. If any man asks, "But what if I do?" it has no answer. It simply marks that man as enemy of the very universe. Not one of us who ever sinned without becoming enemy to the universe. If I violate the law of this land, I

may flee to another and be safe. If I violate the law of God, there is no land to which I may flee. If I dwell in the uttermost part of the earth, He is there. If I ascend up into heaven, He is there; if I make my bed in hell, He is there. Let me violate the law of God, let me sin against the moral law, and I become a fugitive and a vagabond in the moral universe. There is no offer of mercy in the code of law. Here are these ten commandments; they commend themselves as fair statement of the moral law. They are words which God spake. Only shallow souls will count it easy to keep them. Lay your own life alongside them, and they put the best to shame. If any man, then, counts it impossible to keep the moral law, let us not mince matters. It is impossible—impossible because we have weakened our power by violations of the past. Not a man of us who has kept the Sinai code, the code of his human nature, the code of the voice of God—not a man who has kept the Sinai code from the centre of his life out to its circumference. But is he thereby excused? Not a man of us who does not know that he violated that law by his own choice, who does not know in his heart of hearts that he could have chosen other. Let the books and the lecturers

confound us with long words and profound discussions of the bondage of the will, we are not deceived about ourselves. We note that the discussions which end with the assertion that the man is not free to do good or ill, are dealing with the hypothetical man. As for ourselves, call it arrogance or what you will, we are free. We are free to be truthful; the lie comes by no necessity. The hateful word could have been checked. We are to blame for the sin and we know it. We have no answer but silence when Solomon cries out: "Who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin?" And once having violated it, it has no word of comfort for us. Its word is remorse; there is the sin and here are you —face your sin and bear the penalty.

But it is that sort of word, ending there, that drives men to the folly of recklessness or suicide. That is not the final word of God to us. It is exactly our hopelessness and helplessness in presence of sin that makes the message of the gospel mean most to us. The apostle calls the law our schoolmaster, to lead us to Christ. The word is that used for the trusted slave who was sent each day with the children of the Greeks to bring them to their teachers. They were not themselves the teachers. It was only their business

to see to it that the children found their way to the teachers who waited to instruct them. This service the law renders us. From it we do not learn the way of life. Obeying it we come into the path wherein we shall be taught the way of life. For in the fulfillment of the law the gospel comes to our aid. And after we have brought the law of God to bear with all its power on ourselves or our fellows, we will find ourselves pointed to Jesus Christ who bore for us the curse of the law. We shall do badly if at the end of our study we do not know Him better and feel more than we ever have felt our need for Him and His gracious help.

In the wilderness tabernacle there were laid the two tables of stone on which were graven the ten words which make the law. But there is the beginning of the gospel in the fact that their resting place was in the ark beneath the mercy-seat. Every man who knows his own heart will be glad they are there. He will honour the law, he will feel his obligation to it. He will know his failure and the stain that mars his life, and he will find his hope in the gospel of pardon and power.

II

SINGLENESS IN WORSHIP

(*The First Commandment*)

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.—EXODUS 20 : 3.

AND so the decalogue opens with a declaration of a claim of God. There is all the logic of life and of history for such a beginning. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man. Not at all that Israel understood at first the fullness of the command. Certainly there were times when Israel entered very partially into the meaning. It left room in the people's thought for the reality of other gods. Probably they understood it to be a claim upon their undivided allegiance to Him, even though they might recognize other gods in other nations, and might believe that their God, Jehovah, had no sovereign relation to other gods. However that was, and it is largely speculation, the commandment itself is much larger than any such understanding. As the conception grew towards the fuller thought of the absoluteness of God's existence

and right over the world the commandment was found to have been framed for it. There is no place nor room in the universe for another god, and as the majesty and power of the true God came into view, the gods of the heathen appeared what they always were, vanity. It was not long before those who understood the commandment saw what I may call the intolerance of all truth. Granted that a thing is true, there is no room in the universe for its opposite. If Israel thought Jehovah its national God certainly its prophets and seers soon came to see that He is a God of no nation but of the universe. And yet with that knowledge need come no pride of faith, but a broadening of it. No one saw more clearly than the apostle Paul how impossible is any other God than the true God. And yet it is he who declares most plainly that everywhere men are feeling after Him if haply they might find Him. His law is written in their hearts. It is He whom they ignorantly worship. It is He who has sent rain and fruitful seasons, not among the Jews alone, but among the very men who have bowed down to wood and stone.

We may need reminding, surely no more than that, that our present day concern is not with the first Jewish conception of a law which has proved

sufficient for the highest civilization. If they took the law narrowly, it stood as it was, waiting for that broader knowledge of God which could make it plain. There are not gods. There is one God. In His presence let no other be presumed or pretended. Moreover the one God has revealed Himself to all men. They have seen Him dimly at times, but the great word of the first chapter of John's gospel furnishes key to the meaning of religion. John the Baptist is not the light of the world, but "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man coming into the world." He came into the world at a specific time, but He is the light which lightens every man. Max Müller is surely right in saying that the source of all religion in the human heart is the perception of the infinite, the yearning of the soul after God. Men the ages through and the world around have been seeking after God, and He after whom they have been seeking is this one God, whose law we are studying.

The most important thought a man has is his thought of God. In the rush and hurry of our lives we have few enough thoughts about Him. Days pass without the turning of our minds to Him. And yet it is true that our thought of God is the main formative thought we have. It de-

termines our ideas of duty. If our thought leaves Him yonder, far away from the world, then our duty becomes a mechanical obedience to a system of laws. If our thought makes Him Father to us, always about us, always interested in us, then our duty becomes not mechanical, but the seeking and the doing of His will.

Our thought of God determines our outlook on the world. If He is a God, yonder at a distance, then the world becomes simply a place in which men trample one another and no one cares. Let them settle their little squabbles. He cannot be moved about that. But if, instead, we have taken Christ's thought, the world becomes a scene of dramatic interest. We find the meaning of that word of the minute care of God. The sparrow flutters down under His eye. You say He minds the head of a king only. You say, as the pagan philosopher, that the gods concern themselves with the great things but not with the small; then recall the word that the hairs of our heads are numbered. The world becomes a different place by the light in which we view God. There is no sadder creed than the creed of the atheist. It is an orphaned world without the Father's care, and we live in it as orphans. It is a sad world in which indifference leaves us; a

world in which we do not know whether He cares or is concerned with our affairs. There is no thought which so determines the outlook of a man on the world as his thought of God.

So does the same thought determine our ideal of attainment. Every man is bound to face at some time the question of the value of living. Suppose he runs his course faithfully, what is at the other end? To what are we coming? No matter how faithfully we live, sometimes a man fails in life; what is it he has lost? That is not determined by one's thought of man. It is determined by his thought of God. For if man is a child of God, his consummation is a very different thing from that which waits if he is the result of forces which are impersonal and mechanical. And if he is a child of God the whole of his life lies wrapped up in the query as to the character of God.

The most important thought a man has then is that about God. Therein lies the danger of much of our current thinking. Our scientific devotion has been beautiful. Men have been giving their lives to the analysis of the phenomena of the world. But there has grown up an opinion that beside the definiteness of our knowledge of weights and measures, of physical and scientific

things, our thought of God must necessarily be vague and indefinite, if not even impossible. It is easy to dismiss the whole matter, to say that all talk of God is speculation, as is all talk of everything that will not yield to the tests of physical science. Over against that there must always stand the word of Him who so revealed God to us: "This is life eternal that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." If you ask Him, then it is possible to know God. Our thoughts about Him can be verified. They can be verified in history. They can be verified in personal experience. They can be verified by the tests of logic. And President Hall was right when he told the learned men of India that the chief end of Christianity is the knowledge of the Infinite One.

But I hasten to the study of the commandment. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." It involves three things which collide with much current thought.

1. The personality of God. "Before Me!" Here is no impersonal force. Here is nothing which can properly be taken as the Principle of life. Here is a Person who will not be understood by any one of His attributes. We cannot now go far afield into the discussion of person-

ality in any abstract way. Enough that we shall see that we have not stated the fact of God when we have named one of His attributes. It is not to be much wondered at that men have taken the great saying in the Epistle of John, "God is love," and have gathered about it, as though it were the entire fact of the nature of God, and it is not to be much wondered at that they have reversed it at times, and after saying "God is love" have sought to say "Love is God." It is the fashion of one of the reigning cults of religious thought, to say "God is good," and then to count it proof that "Good is God." The scriptural wording that "God is love" is too precious to be even discussed now, but nowhere does Scripture suggest that "Love is God." Rather it does say that love is *of* God. Love is one of those traits which God manifests but it is not He. God is good, but goodness is not God. God is the Person who manifests the traits. In much of our current thinking we are sacrificing this assurance of the personality of God without realizing it. We are forgetting that it is impossible to love a God who is not personal, and that we are not honouring God when we are seeking to make Him so universal in the world that He becomes simply a principle of life, or that He

becomes identified with men whom He has created and who are made in His image. God is not we, and we are not God. He is infinite, personal. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

2. The second implication of the commandment is the possibility of personal connection of God with men. Many a man believes there is a God, who yet has no place for Him in his life. He is yonder, not here. He is above, not on the earth. This commandment puts upon every man the obligation to hold personal relation to this personal God. The pages of scripture keep before us two great facts of the relation of God to the world. This first, that He is transcendent over the earth, that He is not of the earth, that it is impious and irreverent to count an image or a figure, or even a place, essential to Him. He is above the earth and beyond it. Yet they constantly impress upon us that He is within the earth and all about us. Our hymn says it none too strongly, "On mountains or in valleys, where'er we go is God." It is the word of Job, that if we ascend up to heaven He is there, or to the bottommost places He is there. If we take the wings of the morning and dwell in the sun He is there. He is all about us, within us and

around us, and we can enter into constant daily communion with Him if we will. We are losing vastly more than we think when we forget that He is near about us and is concerned with the things that concern us.

3. The third implication of the commandment is the claim of God upon the entire devotion of men. He does not divide His rights. Jesus worded it for us in saying, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." No matter whether Mammon would agree to it or not, God would not; nor would the nature of man agree to it. The interpretation which Jesus gives to the first commandment is familiar: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy mind." Perhaps you are familiar with the instance in the early life of Theodore Parker, in which his mother taught him the great lesson by which he sought to live. He was only four years old, and was going past a pond. There was a tortoise sunning itself in the shallow water at the root of a plant. The lad lifted his stick to strike it as he had seen other boys do. Something within him, like a voice, said, "It is wrong," and stopped his arm. He hurried home and asked his mother what it was. She replied, "Some men call it conscience, but I prefer to call

it the voice of God in the soul of man. Your life depends on heeding that little voice." The life of the race depends upon heeding that voice, which calls to absolute obedience and to entire devotion to Him.

God is the God of all men, but any man's god is that which he puts in the supreme place in his life. All the rights are in God's hands, but every man must concede to Him the right over his own life. You may call that deposed man yonder your king, but unless he rules he is not your king or else you are a rebel. The apostle words it for us in Romans: "Know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey?" Our Lord worded it for us, "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" Even though the commandment does declare the right of God over men it is addressed to men of free will. They will have their god whether they have the true God or not. They may put in place of God something that will rule them. It is because that is so commonly done that it becomes wise for us to think of it.

Observe then the peril of losing God in self-assertion: the peril of letting one's self occupy the throne. I have heard much said against the

word Self-control or Self-mastery. It has been insisted that no man can control himself. Well, the word may not be altogether happy. The fact is perfectly manifest; the man has power so to assert himself that the things which other men are inclined to do he refuses to do, whatever the inducements are. He has the power to set himself with good or bad ambitions on the throne and control everything for their sakes. He has power to take himself as a standard, and so to assert himself that he does his own will and not the will of another. There have always been men in common life who felt that the only hope for the development of the race is in a larger measure of self-assertion. We have had the praises of individuality sung in our ears until the melody is familiar. There have been many more men who have asserted themselves without any theory of life and while still holding to the theory of the sovereignty of God. Here are commandments of God which we do not altogether like. What is our argument then? Not that they are not good for us but that they collide with certain pleasures of ours. We say of our young people, You know you cannot hold them in with reins; by which we mean what? Certainly that they expect to assert themselves, for if you say "You

must not" to them, when they want a certain thing, they expect their pleasure or their desire to have right-of-way. They will do the thing in spite of you. Suppose you say to them that God forbids it. Their reply is that surely He does not forbid it, since it brings them such pleasure. And so pleasure takes first place. We come to think that since God must rejoice in the happiness of His creatures, our pleasures are argument for His will, forgetting that His will is their hope for happiness, instead.

But self-assertion is not the only serious violation of the commandment. It sometimes becomes a philosophy of life. Let me quote four lines which constitute the whole of a poem, and discuss them for a moment with you.

"I, I, I, I itself, I,
The inside and outside, the what and the why,
The when and the where, the low and the high,
All I, I, I, I itself, I."

Where did I find that, do you suppose? If you had quoted it to me I would have supposed that you had charged your memory with lines from a humorous column, or a take-off on some great poet, or some arch egotist. I might have counted it something from Walt Whitman, or Nietzche,

who stood so for the assertion of self. I found it in no such place. These lines with their ten staring capital I's are the motto verse of the text book of "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," of one of our reigning religious fads. They embody the philosophy of the whole book. With many nominal assertions of the sovereignty of God, there is yet that constant assertion of the sovereignty of self. There is a constant seeking after the very thing which the sovereign God graciously forbade men, that they should sometime become as gods. We are reaping the harvest of such philosophy. Coming generations shall reap it more seriously still. Such philosophy of life is the most ominous, perilous and ruinous philosophy that can be taught. The whole logic of it is to take from us our assurance of the unique rights of God in its very claim to bring us to God. And the most ominous and perilous part of it is that Christian people accept it, reading into it their own meanings, and sow the seed for the ruin of generations not buttressed and protected as they are by the great truths of the teaching of Christ. For mark this carefully, there is no one who holds this faith who is in proper sense a product of it. It has not existed long enough to be judged by its fruits.

Of itself it has none. All of those who hold it are the products of the great faith which they have carried with them, consciously or unconsciously. There has been no second generation, no third generation. We shall not know its errors in practice until there comes a generation which is true to its logic, as no man of our generation can be. We are not God and God is not we. Nor will either ever become the other. And as was pointed out in the earlier study that we are reaping the harvest of an earlier generation of a false philosophy, lightly and easily accepted, because it was attractive at first sight, so now it is urged that a later generation will reap the harvest of the sowing of such doctrine as this I am combatting, from which this generation is well enough guarded to escape. When self-assertion leads us to meet our sin, or weakness, or sickness, with the declaration of our oneness with God, we shall soon lose God in ourselves, even though with our earlier Christian training we may talk of finding ourselves in Him instead.

Note then the second peril—of losing God in things. It is what Jesus meant, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Mammon was the Syrian god of riches. He is the god of money. It needs few words to make any man feel that we

are now touching on the grave peril of our commercial life. It is amazing to what lengths a man will go to get and to keep money. It grips him so that he no longer has control over himself, nor yields the control to anything higher. Ruskin illustrated it to the working men of England by his story of a wreck in California Bay. The miner had started for his home, possessor of large wealth. He had turned it all into gold, and had it in his belt rivetted about him so that it might not be taken from him. When the wreck occurred he could not release himself from the belt of gold, and was carried by its weight to his death. "Now," said Ruskin, "did he have the gold or did the gold have him?" It is always a fine thing when a man has a million dollars, because there is hope that he may use it; but when the tables are turned, and the million dollars, or the hundred dollars, have the man, then there is the saddest of tragedies. Money will never use a man well. It will drive him to his death. It will never give him joy while it is controlling. If he has it, and uses it, counting it his servant, and able to recognize God as his King before him, then it may be a blessing to him.

Some readers will remember Dr. Edward A. Washburn. He was once rector of Calvary

Church in Manhattan. Once he had occasion to use what seems to me a very striking illustration in response to the question, "Who is the god of the men of New York?" He imagined a visitor from ancient Athens coming here and asking where he would find the temple of the Great God of the City. Answering the inquiry of the visitor, his friend takes him to a beautiful old building, with a most graceful spire, and in which is a beautiful service. It stands at the head of a narrow street, on one of the busiest thoroughfares of the city. After he has admired the exterior beauty he goes inside. The daily service is in progress. There are present a few people; most of them manifestly sightseers who roam about through the building, looking upon it curiously. He is told that this is the temple of the God in whom we trust. He wonders at the absence of worshippers. Afterwards he goes out and finds his way down that narrow street till he comes to a great white building, up whose stairs men are going in eager haste, down whose stairs men are coming, equally eager on errands which seem connected with their interests. He goes to the main hall of that building and there finds wild excitement. Men are rushing here and there. Messengers are being speeded on errands.

There is manifest keen interest in everything that is going on. Dr. Washburn says that no intelligent visitor could fail to say that here is the real temple of the greatest god of the city of New York. We understand each other about it, do we not? It is only to quote what is often said, that the great race of thousands of men to-day is after money. At first is the thought of things that money can do. We want comforts for our home and our family. We want to be able to do the things that others can do. Indeed, we want to serve our fellows: we want to help our fellow men. So far the desire is subservient to ourselves. We are masters over it, and God might be King over all. But there comes a time when those laws which we know ought to govern life seem restrictive, and we are willing to throw them off for the sake of gaining ends. There is enough to sadden any man in the evidence of that feeling in the minds of some of the men most reputable in the community, as recent disclosures have revealed. We are not pretending that money is not mighty. It is. We are only urging that it is not almighty. There are some things that cannot be bought. No man can violate the law of God in gaining his money, and win for himself the favor of God by the use of his money

afterwards. It is possible to this day for a man to gain the whole world and lose himself.

But God is lost also for very many of us in our study of the things of God without our seeing Him, going our way through our lives with no thought of Him, even though we are dealing with the things which He has made. "The undevout astronomer is mad"; the man who looks at the stars has left God out unless he is able to say, "I think Thy thoughts after Thee, O God."

Then note the third peril—of losing God in popular estimates, putting the opinion either of the public or of a small circle of men before thought of God, until one is worshipping not God in the heaven but the opinions of one's fellows on the earth. When we come to our study of the fourth commandment, we will have occasion to remark how the Sabbath is imperiled by the increase of its use as a social day. There are those who have fallen into that habit who know that it is wrong, but who find it so common about them that they cannot resist it. Here are families who have moved into the city, bringing with them their ideas of God's will. Those ideas have not changed, God's will has not changed, and yet their conduct is entirely altered. They do to-day the things they would never have thought of

doing. They spend the Sabbath in ways which they have no dream of His approving. They practice pleasures or customs which they do not find in His will. They have done it because He has been crowded off the throne of their lives. The people whom they know do it. They cannot bear to be peculiar. They cannot bear to set themselves against a popular movement, even though they feel it is not a divine movement. The whole question of amusement and of conduct will be settled for us if every one honestly sought to find what God's will for him is. We might not agree with the conclusion, and yet there would be no peril for any life in any amusement which accepted that amusement as part of God's will for it. If we honestly sought His will continually, we might do things in our eagerness which were wrong, but we would soon be led out of that ignorance into a wiser way. Therein lies the peril of evil companionship. In the theory of it there should be no danger for a clean-hearted man who honours God, and keeps God before him as Master and Lord, in going into the darkest places of iniquity. You know without more than saying it how easy it is for the desires of a man's life to rise up and take their places of authority over against his knowledge of the will of God. Many of us have

lost God in the crowd. We have become deaf to the voice of His will by reason of the clamour of public opinion and popular movement. We have gone into small circles of men whose opinions have quietly and unnoticedly modified our own until we do the thing now that we would not have thought of doing awhile ago.

And all these perils of losing God become the sadder when we realize how much we lose in our loss of Him. How can we have another god when we have Him? There is no one who can do for our lives what He can do. There is no one in whom we can so fulfill ourselves as in Him. There is no one with whom we can come into contact of obedience who will so develop all in us that is worth the developing, and so burn out from us all that should be taken away from us. When the knights came to King Arthur there passed over their faces a momentary likeness of their king. As they remained with him they took on the very expression of his face, and it became a fixed characteristic. When a man has once found the will of God, and has set out to fulfill it, subordinating his own pleasures, subordinating all opinions to it, it is then he has found life meaning most, and its ideals seeming most practical and real. It is in the

large way what Lanier said to Browning, that in his presence the best of him was always brought out. He makes the most of us. Queen Elizabeth broke the mirror on seeing her gray hairs and furrowed face. Our knowledge of God in Jesus Christ reveals to us the defects and weaknesses of our lives, and yet reveals to us also the possibilities of life, so that we never know until we see Him what we are nor what we can become. We are sacrificing immeasurably when we have any other god before Him.

But for us a finer fact than that is that there is no one for whom we can do as much as we can do for Him. There is no one whose projects are as large as His. There is no one whose plan for the work of the world is so splendid and inspiring as His. There opens before us, as we acknowledge His right over us, the splendid service of the conquest of the whole world, the bringing of the whole earth to submission to Him, the redeeming of the whole world from the thralldom of sin and the bondage of selfishness, until He becomes King of Kings and Lord of Lords, until He reigns over the whole world, which has known many other lords, but never has known one who could be Father and Redeemer and Lover as can He. Turning aside and serving any other God,

putting any other interest foremost in life, is wasting life, is throwing away that which might be used for the greatest purposes of which mankind can conceive.

III

SPIRITUALITY IN WORSHIP

(*The Second Commandment*)

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.—EXODUS 20 : 4–6.

THE first and second commandments are to be kept together, covering different phases of the same duty. The first commands singleness of worship. The second commands spirituality in worship. The first tells us whom we are to worship, the second tells how we are to worship Him. The first forbids putting anything in the place of God; the second forbids putting anything between us and Him. It would be possible to break either commandment and keep the other.

No man needs a divine command to worship. He will do that without command. But he needs his instinct of worship divinely regulated. Even Voltaire prayed in an Alpine thunder-storm, and

Herbert Spencer speaks with awe and reverence of the Unknowable Force. We all worship, but we may worship other than the true God and we may worship Him unworthily.

The second commandment comprises a command and an explanation in two parts. The command forbids the worship of God unworthily, the explanation is that God is jealous for His own glory and for our good.

I. Critics of Moses are fond of saying that the commandment means the death of art. Of course it does not. The tabernacle was decorated as beautifully as Israel's skill permitted. The temple was ornamented with figures of trees, flowers, pomegranates, and the mystical cherubim, winged oxen. Sculpture, painting, all the arts find their perfection in worship. Even the catacombs in Rome are marked with rudely drawn symbols that stood for great hopes of the early Christians. The Mohammedans interpreted the command as though it forbade all forms of art in connection with worship, and their mosques are always barren of picture or statue. The early Christian church was surrounded with the symbols of idolatry, images and paintings which were objects of veneration and worship. Very wisely they forbade any such decorations in their

churches, but they encouraged art in every way in their power. The effect of the gospel of Christ on art is too evident to discuss. The greatest paintings, the greatest works of sculpture, the greatest music—all these are predominantly religious in their purposes. This command puts no ban on art.

At first reading it simply forbids worshipping an image of God. That seems easy to obey. Idolatry is coarse and out of date. We enjoy the sarcasm of Isaiah, when he describes the making of an idol: the blacksmith toiling with his hammer and forge and anvil, in the effort to get his god broad-based enough to stand without falling over; the mason carefully drawing lines by which he may build a god that will not be out of plumb; as a climax the carpenter in his kitchen working over his log, one-half of it made into an idol which he worships, the other half placed in the fire to warm himself! That is the sarcasm with which we like to deal with idolatry. But idolatry is not always so coarse as that. There are thoughtful men even among idolaters, and they have no notion that their image is God. It only represents Him, as your photograph represents you to those who love you. They speak of it as though it were yourself, may even speak

to it, call it by endearing names, and all that, but they do not mistake it for yourself. Or else the idol is a figure which selects some one attribute of God which men need to remember and concentrates thought upon it. Here is an idol from Ceylon. It has awful staring eyes, a long tongue protruding from the mouth and dripping with blood, in one hand flashes a keen-edged knife, in another it holds the bleeding head of a victim, its feet rest on the beheaded body, and its neck is ornamented with a necklace of grinning skulls. It is the god of vengeance, of punishment, of wrath, isolating for your thought that one attribute of God. Other idols represent other attributes of God, their believers say. And at any rate, they tell us, you know it is easy for your mind to wander when you ought to be thinking of spiritual things. The image serves to concentrate your attention. Of course there will be foolish people who will identify these images with God Himself, and will worship the image, but that is incidental to ignorance. That is not necessary. It is intended to worship God through the image, not in it. Indeed "in the history of Greece there was a distinct ceremony whereby a god was inducted into the image which he was to occupy." Until he took up his abode there, the image was

not sacred, it was wood or stone; after the ceremony, it became sacred.

It is in such ways that even the grossest idolatry has been defended from the beginning. Our visitors from India who would teach the errors of the Christian way use that argument with us still. And yet the second commandment stands forbidding just that. We are to have no images that represent God to us. We are to make no effort to bring Him into shape or form before us.

Partly that is because of the danger that the image will take His place and we will worship it in spite of our theory that it is not God. The arguments I have just worded were those of Jeroboam when he established the two calves at Dan and Bethel. The people became calf-worshippers quite against his will. But partly it is because any such conception of God is inherently degrading to Him. God is pure Spirit; He has not body nor parts as we have, nor as images must have, and any effort to bring His glory and perfection into physical form is essentially and necessarily degrading. We will inevitably bring our loftiest conception down towards the level of the representation we make of Him.

It would be interesting to trace the various at-

tempts to realize God in some definite form. Animate and inanimate things have been deified. A pastor one day ran across the name of a member of his church whom he had never met. He called at her house and found her with all her family now members of a sect of sun-worshippers, which she told him had become quite strong in the city. They have full rites and ceremonies. A few years ago a gentleman read to me what he counted a beautiful rhapsody to the most beneficent power in all the universe, a rhapsody addressed in most reverent terms—you would think it a psalm of praise to most high God if you simply overheard it. But it was a hymn of praise to the attraction of gravitation. At times it seems that we are eager to worship anything except Him who alone is worthy of worship.

But the command goes deeper still. It touches the whole matter of our relation to God. It means to forbid our having anything between ourselves and Him. We are to come to Him directly, not through an intermediary. We need nothing to make Him more real to us, if we seek His face. Anything that stands for God to us violates the command. Some of us are in danger of putting the minister or the priest in the place of God. We feel that he has some peculiar rela-

tion to God and that we can get to God better through him. Or we take a ceremony, like baptism or the Lord's Supper, or even the whole worship of the church, and feel that it has in itself some goodness or some spiritual worth. We come to worship the sacrament, instead of God. In my mission calling in New York I found a woman, not ignorant nor poverty stricken, who had in a little glass vessel on her mantel a bit of the communion bread of the last sacrament she had attended, which she venerated with such devotion as she owes to the Master for whose life it stood.

A certain amount of form in service is helpful to many men, but forms are always perilous. They are so easily lifted into a place of importance which they do not deserve. A minister said a while ago that it was as important to salvation to be baptized as to believe in Christ at all. He added his belief that the creed had not been repeated in proper sense unless the speakers bowed their heads at the proper place in the repetition. That is the absurd extreme, but it suggests the danger of all ritual. There are men who always seek to go to God through a minister or a priest. A woman intelligent in most things told me only the other day that in her thought the minister

represents God among men. For my own part, I distinctly claim any such dignity save as it belongs to all Christians. There is no peculiar sanctity about a minister or a priest that gives him special access to God so that the humblest member of the body of Christ may not come to God with just as great ease and with just as much hope of acceptance. And there is no ceremony, nor sacrament, nor ritual which a man needs in order to reach God. In connection with this second commandment there was given a special ritual, but with the coming of Jesus it was ended. The veil was taken away; it has not been re-hung. The way to God is direct—no image, no man, no method, no symbol, no sacrifice, no sacrament, nothing is between any man and his God. That is the whole spirit of the command.

There is a growing tendency in the church to observe times and ceremonies. Services are including more of form than they once had. We hear more about Good Friday, and Easter, and Christmas, and Holy Week. There is room for all this. But there is room also for a very definite note of warning. There is danger in all this. There is danger of a formalism that will take the heart out of our religion. We have distinctly suffered from the wide-spread use of the crucifix

as symbol of our faith. I know we have beautified it. We have gift cards with the cross hid in flowers and gilded quite dazzlingly. Yes, but that has centred our thought on one aspect of the religion which we profess. It is a religion of the death of Christ, but it is a religion of His triumphant victory over death and His present reign over the hearts of men. And we are in danger of magnifying the history of our Lord as a part of human history so that its large and present meaning is forgotten. The faith of Christ, grounded in history as it is, is yet not a religion of history, but of present power and of future glory. It is the assurance of a present Christ that brings victory. The tendency of all times and seasons is to hold our minds to them as though they comprised the only time of our duty. We use Lent as a general spiritual house-cleaning time. Very well, let it be so, but let every man see to it that the daily cleansing occurs. There are people so impressed with the value of that season that they serve the devil with great vigour three hundred and twenty-five days of the year and try to crowd their regard for God into the forty that are left. Into that danger we have not fallen but to it we all tend in these special observances. So with the formalism of our service.

It has a good place, but it brings with it a danger. The worship of God is spiritual. We might read services in the church by the hour, might undertake devotions that would wear our bodies out, and not please God so well as the man who goes steadily on to his toil, and remembers God in the rush of his busy day. God is Spirit, and anything that helps us to forget that He is so, is big with danger. Against it the second commandment stands as the protest of God.

Two things, then, the commandment seems to mean for our present day: First, Let nothing come between your soul and God. Go to Him directly, through form and ceremony and symbol or without them. Let nothing assert its right to intercept your soul on its way to God. And this secondly, Keep your worship of God spiritual. Do not drag God down to any image, or any service, or any place. Let your soul meet Him as soul meets soul. Give over trying to bring Him within your comprehension. End the effort to make Him real to you in any physical sense. He is above all of that. This is the command.

II. The explanation of it is a double one. It is given because God is jealous for His own glory and for our good. You do not need me to remind you that in all our teaching of God we are com-

pelled to use the language of men. The jealousy of God is not the mean jealousy of men who feel that some one else is receiving attention which they ought to receive. It is not the jealousy of pique and selfishness. It is the jealousy of a high minded regard for interests too sacred to be neglected. You catch a faint human glimpse of it in the refusal of Washington to receive from the British commander the note addressed to him as Mr. George Washington, when he should have been reckoned the general-in-chief of the American forces. In infinite measure such is the jealousy of God—a high minded regard for interests which may be neglected only at cost of honour.

When President McKinley was assassinated, there was loud protest in the land against the custom of some of our lesser papers to travesty every act of the President in cartoons which brought him into contempt. The practice was for the time largely abandoned. But the American people were right in their protests. Such representations always conduce to lack of reverence and regard for the caricatured man. Now, that is the principle at stake in every representation of God. It degrades Him, let it be never so fine. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. He

is most holy and august and immeasurably above the earth in which we dwell. How can it be other than a degradation to Him to have us make our little images of Him, or our little pictures of Him? That was Paul's argument on Mars' Hill —We are made by Him and we are better than silver and gold, how then can we image Him as silver or gold or anything else without humiliating Him? You degrade the idea of God if you tell me I must do this little thing or that little thing in order to serve Him aright; I must bow my head here and my knee there, I must say this prayer or follow this rubric, or practice this ceremony, or I am wrong in His sight. You bring Him down if you say it—bring Him down as the idolater brings Him down when he seeks to cramp His infinite majesty into an image. There must be something deeper and greater and nobler than all this which shall reveal Him to my soul. Against any such pettiness the jealousy of God is directed.

Here is jealousy for His whole character. However great or fine your image, it presents only one phase of the character of God. Whether it be the hideous image of Ceylon, representing His vengeance, or the immense figure of the Buddha in Japan to represent His majesty,

or the image of solid gold with silver trappings in India to represent His riches, or even the crucifix of the humble Christian worshipper to represent His sacrificial love, it is all partial. In none of them alone, nor in all of them combined do you see His whole, full-orbed Being. They are all narrow and partial, and they all leave us with one-sided views of Him. Even we petty men, without resentment that may be blamed, are offended at such representations of ourselves as leave unnoted the best parts of our work and service. It is as though in coming years the statesman whose death we mourned but now, who has made America great in the eyes of the nation, were to be known as the author of some nursery rhyme and nothing else. In the image the worshipper substitutes the attribute for God.

Need I remind you that there are prevailing tendencies to do so to this day? Few of our religious notions of the day present us with a well-rounded view of God. This attribute or that is singled out and taken as symbol and sufficient representation of Him. We lose Him in His attributes. We are asked, "Is not God good?" And we answer eagerly, "Yes, unspeakably good." Then our inquirer seeks to make us say, "Good is God," and we draw back. We are not

ready to set an attribute of God in place of God. He is good because He is God, but He is not goodness alone. Another would have us say that He is love, and gladly we say it. But nowhere in the word of God is it said that love is God. Rather is it said that love is of God. If you mean to define Him, then He is most loving and most holy and most good, but through it all He is God, an infinite, eternal and unchangeable Spirit. There are I know not how many cults in our own day which are bidding us develop God within ourselves. No two agree as to the way of doing it, and it is well they cannot, lest we should seek to do so unworthy and impossible a thing. The very wording of it, once we understood it, would approach blasphemy. God is not one to be developed within us or elsewhere. He is always the existent God, whose rays of beauty we catch from time to time in His revelation of Himself to men. We know His attributes, the traits that mark Him, but they are not He, and no developing of those traits within us will ever make us God. Scripture holds it before us as a great certainty that through Jesus Christ we shall become like Him, our Elder Brother, and so come into the lost image of God again, but it nowhere gives slightest hint of our becoming God in any remotest

sense. This plea is a plea for that which the command forbids—the putting in place of God that which is partial and less than Himself.

But the peril appears even in more thoughtful circles. Have we not come to identify God with His best known and best loved attribute —love? Are there not some of us who are slow to see that love is not mere sentiment, that Scripture says with equal firmness, "Our God is a consuming fire"? In our gladness at the vision of the redemption of God, in our exultation that He loves the world infinitely we are losing our sense of that from which He has saved us and which therefore He must oppose with the infinite reaction of love. In our absorption in one trait we are losing sight of God Himself. You have not the character of God wrapped up in any one of His attributes. Your diamond has the trait of hardness whereby it will cut the glass, but you have not the diamond wrapped up in that one statement. You have left out of it its brilliancy, its brotherhood in history and structure with other bodies which have not that trait. You have left out itself. And you have no one attribute of God which wraps up in itself all the others. Until you take the view of God which gives a well rounded thought of

Him, you have the idolatry of the present day which calls for the jealousy of God.

Here is also a jealousy of the Father heart which wants direct access to His children. There must not be interference between Himself and them, nor anything that prevents His fuller revelation of Himself. An idol always fixes the thought of God. You have noted in the history of the race that the nations which have idols have not advanced in their knowledge of God. They have had their idea fixed in wood or stone, and have not left themselves free of heart to receive new visions of Him. And it is the bitterest of idolatry to shut one's heart against God as though one knew all one might know of Him, as though the revelation of the face of God were now complete, as though there could be nothing more to see or know. Generation after generation, new light is coming, coming out of nature all about us, coming out of the revealed and inspired word, coming out of human experience with God, new light that is giving us new visions of Him. Your idol, your required ceremony, your determined order, hinders such revelation, holds you to the old idea, fixes metes and bounds to your thought. It saves you from much folly, reminds you

constantly of the truth which has made the past great, and it renders you good service, but it risks your further knowledge of God. Thought of any church as a final one, whose word is final law, or of any ceremony which exhausts the knowledge of God, or of any order of men which has final right to speak to men for God, is a thought to provoke the jealousy of God. He is a Father, who seeks direct and unhindered access to men, seeks above all to reveal Himself continually more fully than before. This, I count it, is at least part of the meaning of the jealousy of God.

But the commandment is for our own good. That appears in the law of heredity which is so strongly stated here. By it God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him, and shows mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love Him and keep His commandments.

This is no arbitrary fact bound up with this one law. It is a great, unbroken law that finds its large illustration here. Let a lowered idea of God take hold on one generation. Its effect is scarcely perceptible in the first generation. If it could end there, we would have little to mourn.

But that fact gets caught with all the other great facts of a man's life, and becomes part of the coming generation. In the second generation it is more noticeable, and as it comes to the third and fourth, it begins to cut men off from God.

You have occasion to think of that when you see the fine sons of godly fathers, sons who have gone another way and have left God out of their lives, sons who are reaping the harvest which their fathers sowed. You even hear them pleading their own cases as illustration of the fact that belief in God is not essential to manhood nor character. So they hand on to their children none of the training which has made their own character. They leave God out of the lives of their children, they bring no pressure on the door of their hearts to have them open to Him, and so they lower the tone of living in the next generation. On the other hand, you have seen one from a poor family, who caught somewhere an inspiration for the better thing and made a hard struggle towards it. Not much came of it in his own life. He continued to be poor stuff, best he ever came to be. The blood was too thin, had not enough iron in it. But he made an upward start and the next generation

got the benefit of it. You would hardly have known the third generation.

There are some of us to whom this whole fact of heredity and the close-bound solidarity of the race is among the most awful and disquieting facts of life. There are ways of looking at it, that leave it black and forbidding. But there it is. Holmes is right when he says that every man is an omnibus in which all his ancestors are sitting. Every man of us is the focal point for two great streams of life that flowed to him from parents, each of whom was the issue of a dividing stream, and so on back. Each of these streams has brought its flotsam into our lives. A child comes into this world through no wish of his own, child of parents whom he did not choose. Suppose they send into him muddied, befouled streams of life; suppose they bring him into the world, with their wrong appetites, their ungoverned passions, all ready to be set aflame—I ask in all fairness, what chance has he? The old question of Abraham comes to mind, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" On the other hand, when godly parents bring their children into the world it were a mighty grief indeed if they did not inherit their godly leanings and char-

acter. From that point of view, the hope of the world lies in the fact of heredity.

But notice two things which it accomplishes. Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Me—not many generations, you note. Either evil runs out of a family or it runs the family out. There are apparent exceptions to that, but they always leave out of account the incoming currents of righteousness which keep the evil strain of blood from being finally ruinous. And, besides, the purpose of life is not served by long continuing sin, and there is intervening grace to prevent its continuance. You notice a strange sensitiveness to this solidarity in evil among many of the best men. Recall the pathetic way in which Daniel confessed the evil of his fathers as being personal to himself. Recall the same strain in the great prayer of Nehemiah, wherein he confesses the sin of his fathers. Recall the condemnation which Jesus pronounced on the Jews in His saying that there should come on them "the blood of Zecharias whom *ye* slew between the temple and the altar"—"ye," when Zecharias was killed near 800 years before. Then notice the strong tendency to rebel against the law of heredity as unjust. So indeed it looks

in mere theory. But whether rightly or not, society is constantly applying it. Let a father commit a crime, and there are none of his connection who are not made to feel it. Even children are made to suffer, over their lives there hangs that crime, though they had not part in it. Society will believe evil of them sooner for it. We are daily recognizing the solidarity of the race. And we do it in the domain of punishment. But you note that God is far more lenient than men are in this very regard. Read without comment the famous eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel, in which God plainly tells us that He does not hold any son responsible for the acts of his father, nor reward any son for the good acts of his father. The soul that sinneth, it shall die, is the law, and the soul that doeth righteousness, it shall live. But for all that, it is still true that the greatest penalty for sin is increasing ease in sinning, and the greatest reward for good is increased ease in doing good. We are all bound in the same bundle of life. There is nowhere an ancestor in your line who gave way to evil who is not helping at this very day to handicap you in the race for life. There are cold, clammy hands, hands long ago stiffened in death, which are reaching across the years and holding back

men who are within their reach because of blood connection. And the thing of far greater importance now is whether there are men of our generation who are letting into their lives the things that will be heavy for the third and fourth generation to bear. Let every man be sure of this, that if he has yielded to the lower life and has let down his ideals, he is adding to the difficulty of the lives that shall follow his in the natural line. The law of life may not be trifled with, and sin is not to be rooted out of a family on short notice. When a man puts a strain of bad blood into the generation of which he is part he is mortgaging the future generations. And this although the evil seems at times to leap a generation. Ahaz was an idolater and a neglecter of God. His son was Hezekiah, a spiritual worshipper. The evil seemed thwarted. But in spite of Hezekiah and all he could hope to be, the old strain did appear, and Manasseh his son was like his grandfather and not like his father. The second commandment has this for its note of warning. Lower your ideal of God and you endanger future generations. Cheapen your own thought of piety, make little of it, and you start your coming generations towards ungodliness and impiety.

But the law has the other side. The iniquity covers three or four generations. Righteousness covers unnumbered generations. The cure for much of the evil of the present day is past our power. It is in the blood from the wrongs of generations ago. The hope of the world is a constant infusion of good blood from those who are seeking to bring righteousness to pass. Every man who keeps his life up to the high level serves not only his own day and generation, but the generations yet to be as well. God's law takes account more generously of goodness than of evil, keeps it alive longer and makes it more forceful. And the largest element in the strong character that is needed will be a true devotion to eternal things, to God and righteousness. In generations past there were godly men and women who brought into the very fibre of their generation these best things. It is double shame if their sons fall into carelessness and indifference and thwart their purpose and hope.

The command leads us into plain vision of Christ. Over against every image made of men, He stands as the express image of the invisible God. Where they catch only one trait or another, and give us no full sense of God, He gathers up in Himself all the attributes of God

and sets forth His glory to us. Three times in Scripture is there used for Him the word which the Greek writers use in this very commandment. We may not worship images of God, because here is the true image. Would a man know God? Let him study this Son of God. We are turned away from the false images that our hearts may be tender for the true image and that we may see Him fully and truly. And it is in Him that we escape the bondage of the old sin-laden heredity, for it is in Him that we become children of God, coming into line of a new descent, a new strain of blood running in the veins of the moral life, a strain which will not die out in the thousandth generation.

IV

PRESENT DAY REVERENCE
(*The Third Commandment*)

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.—EXODUS 20 : 7.

THE rabbis say that when this command was uttered the whole earth trembled. The name of God as He revealed Himself to Abraham and his followers is not known to this day. It was never pronounced, and even the form which was finally adopted, which is certainly not the original one, was used only on most august occasions. Once in Constantinople I saw a man picking his way with scrupulous care across a littered street. I asked my friend to explain his carefulness. He replied that he was one of a group of devout Moslems who were always scrupulously watchful never to set foot on a bit of paper lest perhaps the name of God might be written on it. Sir Isaac Newton was accustomed never to utter the name of God without removing his hat in reverence. Before he pronounced the name of God,

Boyle always made an appreciable pause that he might utter it with due reverence. There are men to whom this seems mechanical. It could safely be set at the bar of reverent judgment over against the careless and flippant way in which we use the name of God. The name means not only the word which we use, but that for which the name stands, for the whole meaning of God. The Westminster catechism is right in saying that this commandment requires the holy and reverent use of all God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word and works. There is abundant scripture to support that broad saying.

It is a command which calls for reverence in our attitude towards God. It forbids that wretched habit into which so many of us have fallen of jesting about holy things. In a company of Christian men once a story was told in which there were many opportunities for laughter. As it went on towards its climax, we were wondering what the final point would be, assured only that it would be uproariously ridiculous. It suddenly came out with the full name of God. I have always honoured the group which surrounded that table the more for the fact of the dead, awed silence which fell upon them. And yet one hears many a jest which has for its chief

point either the use of the name of God, or of some passage from His word, or of some great hymn which is offered to His praise. It is a miserable habit. It is ruinous to the spirit which He requires as we approach Him.

Moreover it is a command which forbids that carelessness in worship which becomes irreverence. I was one of a deputation which waited a little time ago upon the personal attendant of Baron Komura of Japan. As we were gathered about him, and he was replying to our address, some one came into the door with considerable disturbance, and so far as could be observed not one of the men turned his eyes from the face of the speaker. The respect, the common regard which his position demanded, he received to its fullest, and the lesser, diverting disturbance was not allowed to interfere with him. And yet in the house of God, when word is being spoken of Him and His right over our lives, I have seen a most unimportant incident divert the attention of the entire congregation. Some one rises and passes out as quietly as he may, followed by the looks of the entire congregation, who have for the time forgotten God, whose presence makes the place one of constant reverence. There comes an unavoidable accident. Some one must pay

heed to it for the aid of any one in distress. The lightness of our worship is revealed in the fact that so many to whom it can be of no possible concern allow it to divert them from the observance of that reverence to which they are called by their very presence in the house of God.

A gentleman once said in my hearing that concentration of mind is the rock-bottom of Christian character. The saying appeals to me with reference to our spirit of worship. If we are in the presence of most high God when we come into His house, then surely the habit of attention to trifling things is unsettling the foundation of our reverence. I am passing no more severe judgment in such a matter than does the word of God itself. Doubtless you remember the word that is said in Ecclesiastes—Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, for to draw nigh to hear is better than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they know not that they do evil. There are some of us to whom it has never occurred that this tendency to mind other things than the worship for which we have come to the house of God is developing in us a habit of irreverence. We know not that we do evil. We do evil for all that. Coming into our place of worship laughing and talking, without that outward

manner of reverence which is befitting, involves no conscious wickedness. It only imperils the obedience which we owe to God, that we shall not take His worship in vain.

But of course the commandment stands against irreverence anywhere. It is a true saying that one of the perils of our own day is the loss of the fear of God. We have taken His love so lightly and easily, so cheaply even, that we forget to walk softly in His presence. You will be struck by the saying of a well known minister in this city, that while God is calling us into fellowship with Himself, it would be better that we stand far off than that we rush in and eat off the mercy seat. I would it might grip the thought of all of us, that we are coming to think too triflingly of God. The great things of His majesty and glory are too easy for us to take upon our lips, and even into our lives. We may well learn to stand in awe and to measure our pettiness by His unapproachable greatness. I am the more ready to say this now because there seemed need in our last study for a word which should guard us against mere formalism, and should leave our souls free to run directly to the Father. Freedom is not familiarity, and even with God familiarity breeds contempt. There are

great passages of scripture, there are great hymns, and especially there are great words which have lost their meaning because we have bandied them about as cheap things, for our own pleasure or for our amusement.

Turn now to the literal meaning of the commandment, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God for vanity, or for falsehood. There is in it the prohibition of perjury, lying under oath. There are some who have found in Jesus' word concerning oaths a prohibition of all forms of oaths. Careful reading indicates that this is not His meaning. The literalists of His day had come, where all literalists come, to a mechanical understanding of great principles. They had understood this command to mean that they should not take the name of God in vain, but they could use any form of oath they pleased in current speech. They swore by the heavens as men do still, and by the earth, and by their heads. It was a type of profanity in common speech. Jesus insists that our speech shall be simple and direct, and so reliable that it shall not need sustaining by these trifling expressions or even by serious expressions. This commandment implies that oaths are to be taken but they are to be taken seriously and without trifling. To urge us

not to take the name of the Lord our God in vain is to make very plain the expectation that solemnly and with proper reverence we shall take that name upon our lips. The legal oath therefore is not only permissible but imperative.

There are those who say it is no worse to lie under oath than without oath. It is worse for all that. Lying is always bad but there is double sin when one lies under oath. If you doubt my word, let us suppose, I bring you a third party who witnesses what I say, who has knowledge of the facts, and who becomes a party with me in my story. If now, I lie, he must either contradict me, or else he must become party to my falsehood. If you should discover afterwards that I did lie, you would know that he also was party to the lie. When an oath is administered to me, and I swear as God is my witness to tell the truth, if I lie it involves Him. It makes Him, the God of truth, party in a solemn and definite sense to the falsehood which I have told. He is knowing of the facts, and I, without His will, claim His testimony to the thing which I know is a lie. The taking of an oath, therefore, is a most solemn thing.

Our laws are doing us immeasurable damage in

the trifling way in which they require it to be taken. I asked a jurist a while ago, a man who had risen from the lower courts into the higher, for his impression regarding the giving of oaths. His letter laid almost its entire stress upon the urging that the oath is administered much too frequently. It is administered on most trifling occasions, and for most trifling things. My judicial friend urged that there should be penalties attached for falsehoods in courts of the law, or in matters affecting the State, and that the oath should not then be administered. It should be reserved for those very solemn occasions when more serious interests are involved. The penalty of perjury, that is, should apply to falsehood under legal conditions, but the oath which a man takes should be used only in those grave instances which affect the life of others or large interests in which the character of the man is involved. I know there are other things to say. As a teacher of morals, I am bound to agree with my judicial friend. Putting men under oath over a neighbourhood quarrel, or the value of property, of whose value they cannot be sure, is to make the whole idea of the oath less serious and impressive than it should be. I am not now suggesting whether from the point of view of a court of law

this infrequent giving of oath is feasible. I simply insist that from the point of view of morals it is imperative.

The commandment also deals with the taking of personal oaths, the binding of ourselves with promises in which the coöperation of the name of God is involved. We make these promises quite too cheaply, and we need to hold them all subject to higher obligations. When Herod promised Salome that he would give her anything she asked to the half of his kingdom, it was a promise that was not at any point binding on his life when she asked him to do the thing which violated an always higher obligation. He was under no bond whatever to take the head of John the Baptist and give it to her. That did not belong to his kingdom. It belonged to a realm entirely outside his kingdom. Every promise of ours, whether we think it or not, binds us only in so far as higher obligations will permit. Jesus made that very plain to the Pharisees when He said that no one of them had a right to vow away even to God his responsibility for the care of his family. It is well that we be entirely brave in making promises which we ought to make. The man who is so careful about his word that he will not make promises—say to the church, or to the

Christian life, will very commonly smother his life with promises that are not important. There are promises which we ought to make. We shall not escape our obligation by refusal to make those promises. But we may well safeguard our lives against a glib readiness to promise serious and important things. Especially may we save ourselves from such a common use of God's name in making our promises as will cheapen it to us.

Too much cannot be said of the serious necessity in social life of the keeping of oaths and solemn promises. It would be to the unsettling of the foundations of the entire social structure if such agreements are not kept. The state is right in punishing with severest terms the sin of perjury. We are right in being merciless with the man who binds himself with a promise, and then, unhindered by a higher obligation, which is implied in every promise, trifles with the thing he has bound himself to do.

Another of the prohibitions of this commandment lies in its forbidding the sin of profanity, the taking of the name of God in current speech lightly. I wish I could feel that the commandmeot is not needed, but no man can walk our streets, or ride in our cars, or pass through a group of men, without knowing that a reigning

sin of this day is profanity. Young men who are beardless will take upon their lips so cheaply the name of the mighty God, who made and sustains them, that one could shudder. Even the devils have not gone so far, the apostle James tells us. The devils believe there is one God, and they shudder as they think it. We bandy His name about as though it were the cheapest of all cheap words. For some of us who reverence that name and count God a friend whom we cannot bear to have insulted, there has come to be almost an entire loss of pleasure in the crowd which surrounds our great games, or any place of sport. The baseball field is a horribly profane place in most of its quarters. Our commons in the park is marked by groups whose whole speech is toned to the dialect of hell itself. It is painfully prevalent and unspeakably perilous.

May I gather up for you in three words the chief indictment against profanity? And I do it to deepen your own sense of horror at the light way in which we are using the sacred name, and also to safeguard yourselves against kindred offences. Beginning with the weakest indictment, let us say that profanity in all its forms is ungentlemanly. It is a sin against

society. Not long ago I met a woman who had not heard an oath in ten years. That is a revealing fact. The presence of one who is recognized as a true woman, and in most circles even of a gentleman is a check on profanity. It is the characteristic language of the depraved; the sot and the libertine talk it naturally. Every man who yields to it, whoever he may be, is descending to the level of the lowest of his race, and therein leaving the highest level. Profanity is the hall-mark of the low life. We do not follow Chesterfield with any devotion, but Chesterfield was right in saying that a gentleman never swears. If you will take a group of men in one of the dives of the city, and listen to their talk for very long, you will discover two traits. It will be profane and it will be vulgar. If you take a group in one of our clubs, who are living the fast or the high life, and whose hearts are rotten, whatever their appearance may be, you will note those same two traits: their speech is profane and it is vulgar. They both outrage society. Whatever may be said of them as to other traits, they are ungentlemanly in practicing that which is prohibited in the circles which make society safe.

We rise somewhat in the indictment when we

add, secondly, that profanity is utterly and always inexcusable. It is a sin against reason. There is room for discussion among reasonable men regarding stealing. When Jean Valjean steals bread to save the life of his wards there are some of us who are willing to contend that he did wrong and ought not to have done it. We will listen respectfully, however, to the man who takes the opposite view and defends him for it. Stealing is conceivably debatable or excusable. When a man lies to save his own life, or that of another, there are some of us who will contend that it is wrong—he should not have done it. We will listen, however, respectfully while another man tries to show that it is defensible. Lying may sometimes have a form of excuse. Profanity has absolutely none which will stand at the bar of reason. No man who is thoughtful, either in moral or social matters, can discuss for five minutes all the reasons which men give for their profanity without having his sense of the wickedness and inexcusableness of it deepen in his thought. I shall point out to you presently what some of the reasons are, and try to show to you how they deepen the sin of it. Just now I am content to add this second term in the indictment—profanity is ungentlemanly, a

sin against society; it is inexcusable, a sin against reason.

Add this third item—it is wicked, a sin against God. What actually occurs when a man takes the name of God in vain? He, the creature of a day, is making light of eternal God. He who is the hourly beneficiary of God's care, who has a tongue because God gave it to him, who is surrounded by air because God placed it there and placed him in it, whose throat holds its vocal chords because God made and sustains it there, uses all these to make light of holy God. Whether he be a beardless youth who has picked up phrases from older men, or a man who is deep set in the habit of profanity, it is an utterly inexcusable and indefensible sin against God when a man is profane. Let this stand for the indictment: it is an ungentlemanly, inexcusable, wicked thing to take the name of God in vain.

It will appear in the reasons which are generally given for it. Profanity doubtless originated, as my friend, Professor Patrick of Iowa University has pointed out, in a desire to make one's self impressive to others. He links it properly with the growling of the lion, the hiss of the serpent, and the arching of the back or enlarging of

the fur of animals. They are trying to make themselves larger and more impressive and more awesome. So when men wish to impress others, they call to their aid the most awesome words they can think of. First among those words will stand the name of God. No generation ever gets away from a half-conscious awe of Him. Along with that will come the most awe-inspiring things that He does. The condemnation of men for their sin is invoked in a cheap, trifling way, which has robbed the word of its solemn meaning to us. It would be to some men utterly unthinkable that they have meant that God should do with their fellows what they themselves have expressed. There are men to whom the thought of God's banishing men from His presence is such that they ridicule it, who yet use the phrases of just that condemnation regarding their fellows.

So the profane word is used to give force to our expression; that is, it puts God to the cheap service of reinforcing us. It calls upon Him to aid us in the thing which is at its heart sinful in any case. We use it to express our anger, and so we make God partner with our wrath. It is evil to be angry with a fellow man. Is there any measure to the added depth of evil when beside being angry ourselves we drag Him into the abyss

with us and seek to involve Him in the anger of our souls?

Or, profanity is used to reveal our independence. It is so that it starts with small boys. They are asserting themselves. They want to horrify their gentler companions by coming quickly into their manhood, and showing their independence of devotion, or of tradition, or of reverence. When Peter stood by the open fire and the serving maid accused him of being a follower of Jesus, and he wanted to show most markedly that he did not belong to Him, he used an oath. After that there was no discussion. Every man who knew Jesus knew that this could not be one of His followers. I beg you to notice how completely Peter silenced inquiry and revealed his independence of Christ by breaking into cursing.

For most men, however, profanity has virtually lost its reason. It is simply a habit unbroken. It is remarkable that we should suppose that that involves excuse. Why can we not see that the habit involves a thousandfold more than the incidental sin? If a man has grown into the habit of using the name of God triflingly then there must lie back in his record many and many a use of it, then he must be marvellously callous to the

holiness of that name which he bandies about. Sometimes men look us square in the face and say, "I did use an oath, but I am so in the habit of it I did not think what I was doing." So in the habit of it? What a record the man must have! And how heavy must be the condemnation written already in his nature! He has warped and hardened and calloused his nature, and in that lies no excuse but only added condemnation.

All this is not too seriously said. The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. Profanity, irreverence is a sin against the Person of the Sovereign. It is high treason against the only King of men. It is renouncing His authority, and the punishment is inevitable. It has a punishment in one's own moral nature. It robs one of the delicacy of one's heart. It robs one of the spirit of reverence. It makes one unready to acknowledge the rights and claims of God. One's own moral nature suffers from it. The punishment lies also in the lowering of the tone of the whole race. There is a great pathos about this assertion of ourselves against God. It makes us orphans in the universe. We have lost His Fatherhood. We have banished ourselves from His home. The punishment lies also in the injury of sensitive ones. You have seen children

standing in the edge of a crowd, taking in with open mouth the vulgarity and profanity of men who stood in the centre. Their natures were being hardened, they were being spoiled in the fineness of their lives. Profanity, irreverence is the most coarsening of our sins. It takes away the edge of the fine life. Jesus has already pronounced His woe upon the man who makes one of the little ones to offend. He had better have been drowned in the depths of the sea before any child learned from him irreverence or the use of an oath. The punishment for the sin lies finally in the certainty that if it be not repented of, and the spirit which it indicates be not changed, there is such disharmony between the man and his God that he must be banished from the presence of God. I wish it might be said in such tenderness as He would say it. Why should any man go into the presence of God, accepted and loving, when he has debased for himself and for others the entire thought of God, and has unfitted himself for any fellowship with Him?

But the study cannot be complete without an effort to see how this same sin has its lighter forms, more easily forgivable, because less thoughtful, and that we are widely guilty of it. It forbids the irreverent use of all God's attributes,

and yet have you noticed that those common expressions which we use are almost all either attributes which He especially claims, or are rooted in those attributes? There is something unpleasant and disturbing in the use of the word "gracious," or "goodness," or "mercy" on the lips of a Christian. It is not meant for irreverence, but the words lose for us, when they are so used, their larger meaning. Who are you that you should cheapen the attribute which most high God has claimed for Himself, that the Lord is gracious, that His mercy is everlasting, that His goodness reaches to all men? Why should you even thoughtlessly invoke these great traits of His character for your cheap purposes? When one came to Jesus, and said, "Good Master," Jesus shrank from the word and said, "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but One." Goodness belongs to Him. And yet we will trip off our light slangy saying, in which we claim goodness for ourselves. "My goodness!" What right have I to mention that when He, my Master, would not even claim it for Himself, saving it for the God whom I trust as He trusted Him? So far as I can think, there are none of these cheap expressions which are rooted in anything else than some attribute of God. We are spoiling

our lips by using them. We are ruining our conversation by interlarding it with these expressions.

Will you let me urge that as profanity is a reigning sin of men, so this offence of a cheap use of the great attributes of God is far more prevalent among women than it is among men? There are some, indeed, for whom it takes the place of the profanity to which men are addicted; but there are some who would be much pained to have it suggested that they were yielding to any such vice as profanity, and it is of them that I think now. It is equally an offence against society, and reason, and God, though the degree may differ, equally an offence to take triflingly these attributes of God upon our lips.

When do we need them? How can we justify them to ourselves—these or any others? There are great times when men must use such words: there come times when a man must lift his hand to heaven and swear by the great God who is there. There are times when a man must plead a cause "in heaven's name." There are times when the goodness, and the graciousness, and the mercy of God must be pleaded. Do you not see that we are robbing those times of their meaning by the cheap ways in which we are using the very great expressions? Jesus' word comes again

to mind—Let your speech be Yea, yea, nay, nay. Unload your sentences of this needless weight. If it does not seem strong enough to you to say the thing that is in your heart to say, then keep closed mouth until some strong enough thing does come to you to say. If you have fallen into the habit of buttressing everything you say by some cheap expression, then renounce the habit and make your words in themselves strong enough, and your character back of your words mighty enough to carry conviction.

And all this to maintain between ourselves and our God that solemn relationship which lies in the word "reverence." Do not forget its meaning. It is rooted in the word "to fear" and its first two letters mean "again." Reverence is rousing again in ourselves the fear which any loyal son has for his father's will, and which any creature of God ought to have for his God. It is walking softly in the presence of the majesty of the King of heaven and earth.

V

PRESENT DAY SABBATH OBSERVANCE

(*The Fourth Commandment*)

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.—EXODUS 20 : 8–11.

THE question of the day on which the Sabbath shall be observed does not call for much discussion. The change from the seventh day of the week to the first is fully justified by the unbroken tradition of the church. The celebration of the day now takes us back to the completion of redemption, as before Christ it took its observers back to the completion of creation. The true life of the church received its inspiration in the gift of the Spirit on that day. It is idle to pretend that the day might be changed. Scripture, the history of the Christian Church, and the meaning of the day itself sustain the present observance.

The important question of our day is, *How* shall the Sabbath be observed? That it is sadly desecrated now is beyond debate. More than four million men are regularly employed in labour on the Sabbath day in this country alone. There are business houses wherein the Sabbath was formerly observed, who consider that the increase of their business has demanded more and more Sunday work. Street and steam railroads have become large Sabbath breakers, not merely meeting the needs of the people, but creating needs which they may supply. In many of our cities, the street roads have developed parks at either end of their lines, in which they arrange sacred concerts, given by reverent brass bands playing opera airs and hymns, on Sunday afternoons, thus creating the need for their own services. This is a comparatively late development of the charitable spirit. It is done, you understand, with no thought of profit, but only because people are so closely bound to their work during the week that they must have fresh air and enjoyment on Sunday. Our steam roads have planned the quiet of Sunday by giving reduced rate excursions which cover the Sabbath day. It is purely incidental that there is some small financial profit in this benevolence.

The Sunday newspaper dates from the Civil War. It has become increasingly a money-making and not a people serving institution. Its educational value is absurdly small. By it, women are taught how to become beautiful, small boys may learn how Sandow got his muscle up, and young men may discover how the best people in Paris and London dress. Indeed, if one will look with sufficient care, one may find out how some men write their sermons, and what some of the latest religious fads are. A newspaper publisher in one of our largest cities told me the reason he published a Sunday edition was because it paid best of all his editions. Our baseball games take up Sunday afternoon and thus afford opportunity to a great many who work so hard during the week that they are too tired to go to church on Sunday to get out into the fresh air and breathe in the sweetened atmosphere which surrounds the average company of baseball enthusiasts, and hear their uplifting conversation, which will fit his soul for his eternal home.

I am risking some charge of trifling in dealing with a serious matter that I may accent to myself and to others the knowledge which we all have that most of the violations of the Sabbath

day in large way are traceable to the prevailing lust of money. Our business houses are open, or demand the presence of employees, so that there may be more money made, not so that there may be a better service of the people. Street cars are run, not that people may go to church and run about on the errands of the Lord, but that there may be more money at the end of the week. Baseball parks are not opened so that tired people may rest, but so that the managers and players may make money. It is greed versus godliness, and we have no need to blink the fact between ourselves. The Sabbath is not being observed more loosely in the interest of the better life of the nation, but against that interest, and in the service of our commercial spirit. That is the fact on the side of the men who violate it in the large way. On the side of those who practice the violations which these make possible, the Sabbath is regarded as a day in which one's own will is the thing to consider. That it is God's day, and that the Son of Man is Lord of it, we are overlooking. We ask whether we have not a right to go to a ball game, or the theatre, if we want to, and the reply is that we have no right to use God's time, except as God approves. Suppose a man who is

employed in your office left there every afternoon at three o'clock and accompanied his wife to the theatre, or went to the ball game. You would be apt to say, "Your time at that hour belongs to me, and you are not to consult your own pleasure in it; it is my time, and I direct your use of it." If then you found him persisting in his habit, you would realize that he did not recognize your authority. Which is precisely the situation regarding the present Sabbath observance. Thousands of men do not care what God wants, nor think it makes much difference to them. They have repudiated His authority. They take the time which He has set apart for certain uses and use it in another way and are much aggrieved if in His name objection is raised. It is not that we really need the Sabbath for the kind of thing to which we devote it; it is that we want to do that sort of thing. It is not that we believe it is the wish of Christ that we use it in this way; it is simply our wish to use it so. We are doing our pleasure on His holy day.

Put those two facts side by side, that on the one hand some men are not content with six days for money making and business, and on the other hand that other men want to use God's special time in their own way without reference

to Him, and you have Sabbath violation very fully explained. That is, the necessities of latter day civilization cut a very small figure in the case, spite of the amount of attention we give to them. If we were willing to use God's time in God's way, we could do it.

The Sabbath has a sanitary and physical aspect. It is a necessity to the life we ought to live. Because of that, the state must deal with it. Therein lies the justification of Sabbath laws. In this country the state may not attempt anything that looks like regulating religion, but it may not proceed without recognizing religion. There is a vast difference between regulation and recognition. It is to the interest of the state that men have a sound mind in a sound body ; it is to the interest of the state that men keep clear ideas about God ; it is to the interest of the state that men worship God. But the state can do nothing directly to bring either end to pass. All it can do is to make each of them possible by means of wise laws. No man can retain his spiritual life when he is denied the opportunity of worship with others of like faith. The state may not tell him to worship, nor prescribe how he shall do so, but it may say to any other man, "You may not prevent his doing so." It may make religion pos-

sible to all men. That is, it may say to business employers, "If you do not care to worship, that is your affair, but you may not adopt any policy of business which will make it impossible for men who are dependent on you to worship." It may say to other men, "You may have no zeal for the tone of public morality; you may not recognize the existence or the rights of God among men; but you may do nothing on the Sabbath which will help to lower that tone nor dull men's minds to Him." But it may go farther than that. It may recognize the necessity for a rest day for all its people on the ground of the national welfare. And therefore it may restrict the wish of men who do not see that necessity and who would exploit the public for their own advantage. It may require all men to give their employees their full Sabbath, where a true necessity or mercy does not forbid. It may set men free on that day. For the Sabbath is no restriction on the rights of men. It is a great boon which men may well guard jealously.

There was a certain lad who was counted too small to carry the wood into the cellar from the yard. One day his father offered him a dollar to carry in a cord of wood, which he did by strenuous effort and much weariness. When he had

finished, grateful that the task was done, he went to his father and received his dollar. Then his father said: "I see you are large enough to carry in the wood when there is a dollar in sight; I think you are large enough to carry it in hereafter without any dollar." It is not always wise to do for personal profit the thing one does not want to be forced to do. And no fight of men deserves more hearty sympathy from Christian people or people who love their fellows than that which men wage for their Sabbath rest. It is in the line of seven days' work that slavery lies, and the depression of men into serfs. With much that labouring men are calling for, we may not all of us be in sympathy, but with that we cannot fail to sympathize. In that fight the state may wisely take a hand.

But that is not, of course, the chief aspect of the Sabbath. Laws may permit a great many things which it is not right to do. Indeed, the law cannot reach the heart of the matter. The law could close the theatres and the saloons and the ball parks and the stores and the factories—can do it, and might wisely do it, and so make possible a Sabbath of worship, but no law could make a man keep the Sabbath day holy to God. For the important aspect of the Sabbath is the

personal one. It is that aspect which now concerns us. How ought we to observe the Sabbath?

You have noted the word with which the command opens: "Remember." That is frank recognition that there will be diverting arguments. It will be easy to forget, easy to become engrossed with other matters and so lose our sense of the holiness of the day. Whatever your theory about the Sabbath day and what you may or may not do in it, be sure that you remember that it is a day to be kept holy to God. It is striking that no other commandment opens in this way. There is no danger that we will forget that we must not kill and steal and lie. We know with no one's reminder that we must not. But we are strangely ready to confuse ourselves regarding the Sabbath day. It is well that the word is "remember," You are busy and you have these demands and those calls and you are responsible for this thing and that—yes, yes, all that, but "remember" whatever the rush of your life and whatever the burden you bear, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Consider two items from the commandment: First, that this is a day of rest. It looked back first to the resting of God from His work of

creation. Not that God's activity in the world ceased and He no longer did anything. The activities of God are constant to this hour. That is the word of Jesus, "My Father worketh to this hour and I work." But the thing He was doing till that time of rest, He then ceased. Creation ended, however providence continued. And our Sabbath is not meant to be a day of mere inactivity, of indolence. It is a day of rest from the employments and recreations that occupy our strength and time on other days. It is the time for bringing into play a new set of muscles. It is the divinely appointed break in the grind of life. Some one compares it to the ratchet on the wheel which prevents its running back when it stops a moment. The Sabbath is meant to change our routine, to break into it and give us a new angle of vision upon our lives. We do not get it by doing nothing. We get it by resting, by bringing other lines of activity into place. Periodicity is stamped on our lives. Our wants recur, and any effort to replace the divinely appointed period of labour and of rest with an artificial one has been a failure. You remember that the Roman cycle was of eight days, but it fell into seven under Hebrew and Christian influence. You remember that France introduced

the cycle of ten days, but after twelve years came again to the seven day cycle. If a man will honestly rest for one day, he can carry the burden of his life for six days. But no man can work seven days in a week and serve God acceptably. Men who work steadily seven days in a week are not what they are meant to be and do not do what they are meant to do. God will not have it so. His law cannot be trifled with. That is so with any kind of work.

There are students who think they need to study on the Sabbath. Let it be urged first of all that no student needs to study if he uses the rest of his time as he ought. Of course he can find use for Sunday studying if he spends other time over which he has control for his own uses. But it is very poor religion to spend Saturday for one's own pleasure or that of one's friends, or even in domestic duties, leaving no time for study, expecting to use the time which God has set apart for other things, to introduce into it the grind of one's week-day life. That is robbing God. It is robbing one's self also, for the Sunday hours are needed for the purposes to which God has set them apart. And a student needs the rest of the complete day of release from daily study, which is quite as much his daily toil as

tending the counter is the daily toil of some others.

There are men who feel that they must do some of their business on Sunday. They must go to the office a little while on Sunday morning. They must see to the mail. They must get things in condition so that it will not take so long to get started Monday morning. They must take a little time Sunday afternoon to look over an important batch of papers. Well, whatever argument there may be for doing these things, and breaking in on the Sabbath day, it is utterly unwise; it is thoroughly dangerous. The more I talk with men about it, and the more I hear about the average two hours of necessary Sunday business, the clearer I am that it is not necessary and that the apparent necessity could be removed if they cared very much to remove it. I am content just now with that one word, "Remember." Be clear on this, that a man endangers, injures his spiritual life by any such course. He brings into the day set apart for rest the things that have wearied him in the week. No man can keep himself open-hearted to God while he is qualifying his obedience of His law. But remember this, too. We open the flood gates when we make this little break in the barrier between

the Sabbath and the rest of the week. Most business men count themselves the victims of conditions which were framed when they went into business. Perhaps they are, but they become agents in perpetuating those conditions if they fall in with them. As a victim of adverse conditions, a man is worthy of all respect. As an agent to perpetuate and magnify those conditions, his position is quite other. There is more Sunday work now than there ever was before. That is because men just like ourselves did not say No, when the opportunity came for Sunday work years ago. The hope of the coming Sabbath is in such men as a well-known railroad official, official also in one of our Christian churches, who has said No regarding long lines of freight cars, and has found that he can reduce Sunday business very largely even under adverse conditions.

Some of you will remember that your first Sunday work caused you something of a pang. You felt that it was not quite right; you even resented it a little. You have lost that sense; you take it as a matter of course, and it grows on you somewhat. That is the tendency. It is the downward tendency; there is no doubt of that. And I am anxious for some of you and for those

who will come after you. You are getting the affairs of your business, or you are helping others to get the affairs of your business in such condition that it will be more and more demanding of Sabbath work, and those who come after you will find it harder than you will now find it to change the whole system in which you are caught. You are endangering the future Sabbath for men who will come after you are gone. If *your* business prosperity calls for a little Sunday work because of the strenuous conditions under which your work is done, why may not *their* prosperity demand the entire day? There are men already giving practically the whole day to their business, and they say just what you say to explain the little you do. I beg you consider, simply from the fact that God means the day to be a day of rest, whether you are on the safe side.

But this is not the most pressing phase of the Sabbath. It is meant to be a day of *holy* rest. It is a Sabbath unto the Lord your God. In the word of Jesus, it is a day made for man, for that which makes a man a man and not a brute. It is a day intended to serve our spiritual lives, not our physical lives principally or only. Our physical rest we must have, not alone for the

work to which the will of God calls us six days in the week, but most essentially for the reviving of the spiritual lives which are the crowning fact of our manhood. The great appeal of the day is not to our brute side. It is to that side whereon we are allied to God. It is the day of "renewing acquaintance with God." The man who leaves God out and does not make it a holy day has not observed God's Sabbath, whatever he has done or left undone. Into the materializing tendencies of this day there comes the powerful appeal of the Sabbath, reminding us that there are eternal interests which have first right with us. Six days of the cry of the world in our ears! One day of the cry of heaven and the eternal life! And how such a day is needed! Recall the familiar cartoon of the trusts—a great bloated, distended body surmounted by a little head. It is the peril of our times, the peril that we make to ourselves great material possessions, while our souls shrivel, the peril that we shall become important to our fellows because of what we have, and then find ourselves of no importance in that place whose people do not ask what a man has, but what he is. The Sabbath comes into our hard lives to train the head and heart in the things of the eternal life. And yet, how strangely it is used.

There are thousands who use it for a day of a little more sleeping and a little more eating, use it for a day that serves the brute side of them a little more fully than other days. Is not this the program of many a man for the Sabbath day, of many a being with eternal life to live and to prepare for—Sleep until 9:30, drowsy all day because of it, tracing that to the business of the past week which is not its cause; three great morning papers before noon, whereby all the flood of secular life sweeps over the soul, leaving its deposits which are discussed with friends; a heavy dinner at 1:00, a nap of an hour or two, a stroll on the boulevard or a drive in the park, a visit with friends, an evening of chatting about anything but spiritual things—and no thought of God, no act of realization of Him, all temporal things, all material things, nothing that fits a man to face eternity, nothing that sends him back to the Monday work with a clearer sense of the Father of his life in whose services he is to spend the week. Are the things which fill the day wicked things? Are they sinful? Is he breaking any law? The questions are idle, beside the real one—is he keeping the Sabbath day holy? Is he making it the day of his spiritual life? Is he keeping it a Sabbath unto the Lord his God? That is the test

question. And that is the question about the things which we so love to discuss. Shall we take a walk in the park, shall we drive, shall we call on our friends, shall we read the magazines, shall we play this game or not, and all the rest of the debated matters. Each of them involves the same principle as the others. Is this the way to make the day holy unto the Lord? Is it the way to make the most of the one day set apart for eternal things? During the reign of James I, the diversion of the fine ladies was a fancy work called knotting, something like the netting of the present day. A company once asked Bishop Neale whether ladies might properly employ their hands on the Sabbath day in knotting. Very shrewdly he replied, "They may (k) not," and they could not tell whether he meant a "k" on the word or no. It might be easy to settle the case of this single pursuit or that, but a far better thing for all of us is the great law that the Sabbath day is the day for our spiritual lives, and in it we are to do the things which help forward those spiritual lives. It is not the day for our intellectual lives, nor for our social lives, nor for our physical lives primarily. It is the day for all those phases of our lives, but as they bear on the eternal life which we are all seeking to live.

It is the Sabbath of the Lord our God. It is the day to renew our connection with the things which are most worthy of our eternal lives. It is to preserve our manhood, to keep us from becoming coloured at heart with the dye in which our hands are working, that the Sabbath is given us.

Three direct words of suggestion will close the study:

1. Let it be said very earnestly to young men and women, that the Sabbath stands at the parting of the ways in the lives of such as they are. Its observance measures the development of the spiritual life. Those who have come from places of less excitement and inducement to Sabbath violation are in peculiar danger in the city. The strictness of the former observance is so utterly lacking that it is easy to fall out of it. Usually the non-observance of the day begins very gradually, and seems defensible, but it is the beginning, and the end is not far away. Guard all the hours of the day jealously. You can afford to be overcautious rather than careless. Keep the day for the purpose for which it was given—for rest and for the culture of real manhood.

2. Let it be urged that the Sabbath be taken as a joy, and not as a bondage. We parents are at fault in our treatment of our children on that

day. We ought to be able to devise ways whereby we may make it an attractive day to them. They might have specially attractive games, which are sacredly reserved for that one day. They might have special attention from mothers and fathers which is not possible on other days. If we really seek them, we shall find ways to make Sabbath the great day of the week and not the longest day for them. If we devote the day ourselves to yawning and sleeping and wishing it were over, and if we take its hours as the longest of our lives, or chafe under its wise restrictions, then we have mistaken its meaning. The prophet calls us to make the Sabbath a delight. It simply is not that to a great many people, but until it is, it is not fully observed.

3. Then let me plead for the custom of the older Jewish régime, whereby the preceding evening becomes a time of preparation for the day itself. You remember it was the custom for the day to begin at the preceding sunset. In the early homes of some of us, Saturday evening was the time for getting everything in readiness for the morning of the Sabbath. There was never any rush; we did not have to hurry and run here and there in order to get ready for the day. It was the quietest, least hurried morning of the

week because it had been anticipated, and everything was ready for it. Moreover the evening before was kept free from burdensome social engagements. There was no restriction placed on it, save as it might be helpful to the next day. But it is poor economy, both of time and strength to let the evening before our day of holy rest be one which runs us far on into the night and leaves us exhausted the next day. When we do such things, let us be done blaming our daily work; it is our Saturday night pleasure instead that wears us out, and requires that we sleep away the Sabbath hours, so that it is such a hardship to keep the day. Sir William Cecil, throwing aside his official robe at night, said, "Lie there, Lord Treasurer." So we throw aside the week, "Lie there, world, business, temporalities; lie there." And in the morning we wake just sons of God to meet our Father afresh.

Of the future life we are told nothing more definite than that it shall be in fullest sense what the well-spent Sabbath is here on the earth. There remaineth a Sabbath rest for the people of God. It will be a time of close fellowship with God, of free communion with Him, of the development and culture of the whole man. God grant us grace to keep each earthly Sabbath in such wise as will fit us for that eternal Sabbath!

VI

PRESENT DAY FAMILY LIFE
(*The Fifth Commandment*)

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—EXODUS 20 : 12.

WHETHER this commandment belongs in the first table, as one of the duties men owe to God, or in the second table, as one of their social duties, has been subject for much discussion. For myself, I place it in the second table, without forgetting the wise word which is said about it by those who place it in the first table, that a child's first realization of God is in his parents. Most that God means later to a man, his parents mean in large measure to a child. It is suggestive at any rate that it stands first among the commandments which affect our relation to our fellows. The unit of society is not the individual but the family. Every man enters the world in a social circle of at least three—his father and his mother and himself. However that circle may be widened, or however its bonds may be broken by

physical absence or death, the social meaning of it is never altered. The family continues to be the unit of society. Government started there and still starts there. Discipline began there and still begins there. The law which touches the family is necessarily a fundamental one. This is the law of the family: Honour thy father and thy mother. We may not stop to point out how the commandment changed family relations from the day of its writing, in that the mother took her place by the father for equal honour from the son. Enough that now we shall see that that social circle is to be one maintained on the basis of honour.

The commandment has another preëminence in that it is the first one with promise. The second and fourth commandments both have explanations; the third has a warning; the fifth is the only one which contains promise. It amounts, you see, to a plea for conservatism: Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. As we saw in the study of the second commandment, this is no arbitrary promise. It is not like a promise which you make of a bit of candy to a child for doing an act utterly disassociated from your reward. It is a statement of

the great law of life. Violent breaks between the present and the past always endanger the future. It is when the present takes account of the virtues of the past and pays to that past the honour which it deserves that it insures the future. There is a period in our lives when we are contemptuous of old notions. There is a spirit which takes possession of a whole nation at times, which makes it iconoclastic, eager to destroy the old traditions and the old notions. That spirit is never a safe one. It may work out into something good, but before it has finished its work it will wreck the man, the nation, or else a way will appear to gather up the good things of the past and use them in the present life.

The commandment doubtless applies beyond the family and touches the national life. It is not, of course, the entire explanation of the fact, but it is at least suggestive that the oldest nation with a continuous history in the world to-day is the one in which this commandment is the supreme law of social organization. I make no comment upon the Chinese save upon the continuity of their present social order. Beside that order our own nation is an infant of this morning's birth. And at the very rock foundation of the social order lies this honouring of ancestors.

The commandment in its very verbiage suggests that when the Lord God gives us the land He means us to hold it by faithfulness to the past while still we are to reach out into the larger future. It is no plea for such conservatism as forbids growth. It is a plea for that conservatism which forbids cutting loose from the past.

Moreover, the commandment is doubtless wider in its appeal than simply the circle of the family. The Westminster catechism is correct in saying that it calls for the preserving of honour, and performing the duties belonging to every one in their various plans and relations as superiors, inferiors, and equals. It means that in all our relations, both upward and downward, there shall be a basal principle of honour.

Both those broad statements of law are surely true. It does apply to national life. It does apply to the entire social circle. The need of this hour, however, is not for accent on either of those implications, but on the very heart of the commandment. This is a plea for the care of the home. Principal Fairbairn is right in saying that the recovery of the home is the final necessity of the situation. One of our present students of social conditions and evils has just now said that the only substitute for the saloon is

the home. And surely for any one who looks upon some homes there is little need for further explanation of the falling of men into dissipation and sin. When a man comes to his home and it consists of one or two small, ill-smelling rooms, crowded with cheap and filthy furnishings, with no comfort nor possibilities of comfort, and not far away is a brightly lighted and airy saloon with genial companions, it is small wonder, even though it continues to be a great pity, that he finds his way there, and goes farther than he meant to go. He is arrantly selfish in doing it of course. His wife cannot go. He leaves her in those small stuffy rooms. And into the support of that light and airy room of the saloon goes money which might go at least some distance towards securing rooms of similar character for his own family. It is selfish but it is very natural.

The need for the home appears also to any one who will walk the city streets in the late evenings. A wave of shame and indignation swept over the land during a recent summer as we discovered what was being lost through neglect of the home. A girl of thirteen died in childbirth, a dozen children were found in places of shame, gangs of small boys were dis-

covered. Lay the blame as much as we will on the churches, or the police force. After they have had their share of the blame, the fact is that the great burden of it lies on parents who have so little care for their children that there is no home established, and that their children may do as they please.

There are many disintegrating influences at work upon the home. There is the increasing diversity of interests among those who go to make up any single home. One member of the family is deeply engrossed in his business, he thinks little else, he takes little part in the life of the home. Another is interested in various lines of social or even philanthropic work, she has little time or strength for anything else in the home. The young people have their own circles of friendship; friends of the sons are often entirely unknown to the parents; the daughters have circles of acquaintance and friendship of whom parents are in entire ignorance, not because sons or daughters have concealed their associations but because the family life has grown apart.

Then there is the disintegrating influence of easy removal from place to place. It is incident to the increasing apartment life of the city, and the increased transportation facilities in the

country. It is a very simple thing to move out of one apartment into another, and to tear up the very roots of the family life. Some one said the other day, that we have now Bedouins of the Boulevards and Arabs of the Avenues. They fold their tents and silently steal away, without any real upheaval of life because life never was settled in the former place. All that breaks up the family unity. The young people retain their fellowships in the other place or else the parents do, and the other side of the family form their new connections near by. The result is that the family pulls apart in its interests.

Then there is the disintegrating influence of our over-emphasis on individuality. We are insisting that the individual is first to be considered. In that insistence we make grave mistake. It results, however, in each one forming a circle around himself, without shaping himself to the natural circle which lies in the family. One of my medical friends says it is not at all uncommon for the four members of a family to have each a separate physician, and never to think of calling the father's physician to treat the mother, or the son, or the daughter. Certainly there is a tendency to diffuse our interests until we hold but few in common.

All these influences and a good many others increase the need for this commandment, that the home shall be maintained, and that the social relations which are natural to us shall be first considered before we talk about killing other men or stealing or lying. There stands the commandment to maintain the social circle into which we have come in the nature of things.

You have doubtless read many times that the great discovery of the nineteenth century is the child, and notably the rights of the child. Let that be admitted, and then let us emphasize that in our enthusiasm over the rights of the child we may be in danger of forgetting that he has duties along with them. Probably there never was a time when very young young-people did not know it all. Sometimes our older people of the present day remind us how different things were in their day, how children of their day were always respectful and obedient and unobtrusive. Now one of the perils of looking too far back is that we are inclined to remember things which are really not quite so. It would be interesting to know what the grandparents of that day said about the children of their time. Probably the conditions are incident to our natural growth. It is no pessimism, therefore,

it is simply fact, to say that there is a current pertness, self-assertiveness, about a good many of the children and young young-people, against which this command stands strongly. There are families governed from the bottom and not from the top. The children have the reins. The parents are out of date. That is specially the thought of a good many lads and lasses about their mothers. Fathers are a little more apt to be rated high. Mothers, just because they are always with their children and have occasion to express a good many more opinions, and especially because to them fall the negatives and discipline which children dislike, are more easily thought of as unappreciative and uninformed. At the root of it lies, as at the root of most wrong, simple selfishness.

There is need for a very urgent word to a good many young people who are still in the family life about their proper attitude in the family. There is no room in the family for a cowed and whipped spirit, but there are few things more repugnant to a thoughtful mind than a boy or girl who owes every comfort and convenience and pleasure to parents, pulling against the limitations which are placed over him. It is in God's plan that we outgrow our parents. We do not

always do it, and we never do it until long after we think we have accomplished it. There is no girl of sixteen who is apt to be as wise as her mother. It is even true that many a boy of sixteen does not know as much as his father does. Of course he goes to a better school than his father had; he knows perhaps a different kind of people than those with whom his father mixes, but aside from the fact that his father's name in most cases is worth considerably more at the signature end of a check than his own, his father has also the merit of having made a character that really goes farther than the boy's lack of character. That can be said with perfect kindliness, because every man who has passed through his boyhood has had to learn that lesson for himself. It would be to our great happiness if we might save some lads the regrets which we have had for not knowing that simple thing. The fact is that the place of a child in a home is a subordinate place, and while he belongs entirely within the family circle it is his business to look up to those who are the heads of the home. Look up, mind you, and cease crowding himself into the place where he does not belong when he begins to look down on them or feels superior to them.

That is really what honour means. It means to hold the proper attitude towards those who are above us, to recognize their higher worth, their greater rights, and their dignity as compared with ourselves. If you should go through the valley outside Jerusalem, where the tomb of Absalom is, you would to this day see Jewish children led by their mothers as they pass that tomb take up stones and cast at it. That is done that the children may realize the shame which all the ages give to the son who is not obedient to his father when that father is worthy of his son. James IV of Scotland took up arms against his father and fought against him. When he came to his senses and knew how he had dishonoured himself and his father he wound about his loins a chain, to which he added one link with its increasing weight every year, that he might realize the increasing shame that comes upon a son who has lifted his hand against his father. When Samuel Johnson was a lad his father kept a book stall in Litchfield, and on market days used to have an open stall for the sale of books. One day he was ill and told his son to go and care for that public stall on one market day. The lad was just forming his circle of young manhood and young womanhood

friends, and was ashamed of the business and the publicity of it, and refused to go. When he also came to himself, and realized the greater shame of blushing to do the thing by which he and his father lived, even when he had come to be an old man he went and stood with bared head, all through a market day on the site of that old stall, that he might do that measure of penance for the wrong he had done.

George Washington had his heart set on becoming a midshipman. His mother much objected. His trunk had started, was on the ship. As he went out of the door, his mother gave him her farewell, but with the word that he was going without her consent. On his way to the ship he turned suddenly and came back, sent orders for the return of his trunk, and when he went into the house his mother said, "God will bless you, my son, for honouring your mother." The blessing came in the honour of the whole nation. Of all the things told of President Garfield, surely there is none finer than that scene when he had been inaugurated as president, and turned with a kiss of affection and laid all the honour of the event at the feet of his mother. The army and navy officials are agreed that that boy is always best safeguarded who writes to his mother regularly. And I have

gathered these familiar incidents together only that you may see how possible it is for one to live the nobler life while still recognizing the dignity and worth which belongs to those who are our superiors.

Nor can the commandment ever be outgrown. Remember it was not addressed originally to a Sabbath-school class, nor to children. It was addressed to the same men who were bid to keep the other commandments. It was addressed to men who were gray as well as to men who were young. No man ever grows so wise or so great that it is not incumbent upon him to honour his father and his mother. The coming-of-age in legal sense is a wise limitation upon certain lines of obedience. There is a period in our lives when our parents have right to command us. After that, they lose the right to command and demand obedience, but they never lose the right to claim our honour. One of the most difficult duties on the part of parents and of children is that of passing gracefully from entire inferiority to some measure of equality. It is one of the most delicate arts of which parents are capable that the transition should occur without the recognition of children. That it can occur too early is very sure; that it can occur too late is also sure. But there never comes a time, whenever that change

does occur, when the fifth commandment ceases to be the law of relation between parents and children.

But all this while we have been leaving unsaid the hardest word which must still be said. We have been implying that parents are always worthy of the honour of their children. What shall be done about dishonourable parents, parents who live and act in ways which any honest child may know are poorer than his own? I do not mean ignorant parents. The man is not worthy of recognition who is ashamed of his father because of his ignorance or hard hands. I am thinking instead of parents whose lives are ignoble. What shall a fine-grained son think of a father who has become a sot, or a libertine, or a thief? What shall be the attitude of a son towards parents who have disgraced the name? The papers tell us of a mother who sought in one of our cities to lead her daughter into a life of shame; what shall that daughter think of the mother? Does this commandment apply there? We who have never had such experience must always speak very softly when we speak about this. Let the word be Yes—it does apply there. It is still true that the evil father is a father, and the evil mother is a mother. There is less said about Jonathan, the friend of David, than there might well be. He shows to best advantage as

the son of Saul. Knowing through all of his manhood life that his father was cherishing an unworthy hatred, and was acting falsely and shamefully, and compelled at times to take an honest man's position against his father, you will remember that from first to last he held him in the esteem which a father as such may claim from a son. He never honoured his vices. He never regarded his sins as virtues. He never cloaked them, and yet he never paraded them. There were times when he left a group of men rather than manifest the feeling he had. Let Saul be or do what he would, he was still his father and as such he honoured him. That possibility still remains for any man. His father may have damaged him sorely. He may have brought a curse upon his life. God forgive the men who have done so! He may even at this hour be blocking the road of that boy to his best manhood. He may have brought shame and disgrace upon his name until the boy hides his head. That mother may have lived so cheap and poor a life that her daughter who has caught some ideals of living is ashamed of her, dislikes to have her near her. She may even feel that the mother has handicapped her by being the woman she is. And yet it still continues true that the fatherhood and the motherhood to

which the boy or the girl owes existence is in them, and the whole opportunity of living, which is greater than its disadvantage in any case, has come through them, and for that reason they are still worthy the honour which would be impossible to them as individuals and for their personal lives.

But many of us are parents, and it is to be said in all earnestness that if we expect our children to honour us we may fairly be required to be honourable. It is fair to demand of us high ideals for ourselves and our children. Pettiness is the final sin of parenthood. The holding of an ideal before our children, urging them to attain it, while they know perfectly well we are not turning our hands over to attain it, or are deliberately yielding to inducements against it, is to put ourselves to shame, and to qualify the honour which they can give to us.

It is fair that we be required to care most for the most important things. That our children shall look back after a while, honouring us so far as they may, but feeling that they have lost a great deal out of their lives, not of pleasure but of power, because we entirely miscalculated life to them, is to lay up for ourselves pain. When a mother is zealous that her daughter shall dance well, shall take all the touches of social and even

of educational life upon her, but has no zeal for her spiritual power, lets her run wild so far as that is concerned, takes no hand herself in shaping her life, the daughter may have something to thank her for after it is over, but she will go through her real womanly life, if she ever has it, without the mother whom at that point she cannot honour. At that point, I say, for if we care most for the lesser things, we have disturbed the balance of life for our children, and as they come into knowledge of their real manhood and womanhood, as please God they may, they will find that we led them wrong.

It is fair to require that we be worthy of the honour in that we teach our children the large lessons of life. It is in the home that a child learns obedience if he ever learns it. The school might teach it to him. The street certainly will not teach him any true lesson of obedience. It will teach him corporate life, a certain measure of social life, but he will never learn the lesson of an honest and manly obedience to law on the street, and the school has little chance to teach him. He must learn to be controlled and out of that pass into self-control in time. I confess that my mind goes in part at least to that time-worn discussion of the various forms of punishment. I am not thinking of corporal punishment in the

sense in which we ordinarily speak of it. I mean the various forms of discipline which take account of offences and bring penalty because of them. Some of us have mothers like that one who raised seven sons, all of whom were an honour to her, and when asked for her method said it had all been done by prayer and hickory. Either without the other would avail only a little in the training of some of us at least. When, however, one is declaiming against punishment in the family, saying that for his part he believes in governing by love, it should be sharply resented. It suggests an utterly unfair antithesis. It suggests that government by love is incompatible with a government in which punishment has place. The man who believes that the government of love has in it no swift and sure penalty for misconduct and violation of the law has God's universe to reckon with. Punishment without love is always a disgrace. Punishment in anger is always injurious. If a father has so lost control of himself that he punishes a child in his wrath then he is a disgrace to fatherhood. But love that is afraid to punish is always feeble. To pretend that a father may not out of very love for his child punish that child physically or in any other way which seems to him the wise way is to pretend simple nonsense. Govern by love

of course, that is the one bond of any family; but how that love shall express itself is not settled by talking sweet folly. It will express itself many a time by punishment, and thereby the child will learn that he cannot trifle with law, thereby he learns obedience, and he goes out into the world with a lesson for which he thanks his parents, if he ever grows to wisdom—that back of law lies love, but that love has law for its uses. Some men never learn wisdom and you occasionally meet foolish young men who lay all the blame for their foolishness on their parents. Perhaps that cannot be avoided, unworthy as it is. At any rate, we shall not win the honour of our children until we teach them the great lessons of life, the lessons of fellowship, of sympathy, obedience, self-control, showing all these lessons in ourselves.

The practical duty is all gathered up for us in that double facing of the divine life. On the one hand, Jesus was obedient to His parents. Though He outgrew their authority, He never outgrew their honour. The last thing He did on the cross was to make adequate and wise provision for His mother. On the other hand there is the Father of us all, who looks over His great family, teaches us our lessons, holds before us the great ideals, cares most for most important things, and after a while gathers us all together in His home.

VII

PRESENT DAY REGARD FOR LIFE
(*The Sixth Commandment*)

Thou shalt not kill.—EXODUS 20 : 13.

YOU can almost measure civilization by the regard which it displays for human life. It is a suggestive touch in the Scripture story that one of the earliest effects of the ruin of human nature in the fall was the lessening of regard for the sacredness of life. The first son of the fallen pair was a murderer ; the second son was his victim. There could be no better way to teach us that regard for human life is endangered when regard for God is lost.

Not that this disregard appears in laws. They are often entirely commendable. It is in practice that the lowering of the tone of life appears. The Roman law sought to throw many safeguards around human life, always meaning free human life. Slave life did not count in the reckoning. Seneca put the whole law in one fine phrase : Man's a sacred thing to man. But you remember that gladiators fought in presence of the finest of Romans, fought to their death, and the

delicate ladies of Rome turned their thumbs down as readily as up. These same Roman ladies welcomed the plague which swept away thousands of the poor people of the city, because it left the more room for their carriages and trains to pass through the streets. Whatever Roman law was, life was not sacred in Rome.

We are hearing more about the wonderful civilization which Egypt must have had, the monuments and sculpture being witness. A gentleman once instanced in my hearing the great pyramid as evidence that modern civilization is not in advance of ancient. But the great pyramid cost thousands of lives, the product of unpaid slave labour. There has come across all these years the story of the reply of an Egyptian king during a similar enterprise when the rollers on which a great stone was being moved seemed to need a lubricant. He ordered a wretched slave thrown under them, that his blood might be lubricant for them. One of the careful students of ancient civilization assures us that we are now dealing with one of the deepest defects of its history. It had no regard for human life.

We are not too far from a similar defect. Men of great ambition have even of late been willing to see their ends gained at cost of life. You may

recall the famous interview between Napoleon and Metternich. The emperor had demanded a report of a certain campaign. "Sir," said Metternich, "you ought not to undertake it. It will cost you one hundred thousand men." "One hundred thousand men," said Napoleon, "what are one hundred thousand men to me?" And Metternich went to the window and opened it wide and exclaimed with indignation, "Let all Europe hear that infamous declaration." Even that is farther back than we need to go. The anti-Jewish atrocities in Russia keep us reminded that human life is not precious in our own day. Women and children, who at least were innocent of any offence which might have provoked popular wrath, have been mercilessly seized and upon them have been committed horrible indignities, beside which death must have been sweet. There are some who would have our government interpose with strong protest. Let us not forget the word of our Master which bids us cast the beam out of our own eye. One of the worst effects of sin is its shutting our lips when another man sins. Our own skirts are not clear. We have offended. It is not very long since the Italian government found us helpless in presence of an American mob in New Orleans. The Austrian

government once filed formal protest against our treatment of sojourners from its own land here. Even the Chinese government has protested without avail against the slaughter of its citizens in one of our states. Protest against the deed of a mob in Russia? Who shall protest against the deeds of a mob in our own land which takes a man against whom nothing is proved, and burns him at the stake?

For we are grievous offenders against the law in our own land. That terrible trinity of offences, lynching, suicide, murder, hold carnival with us. Only slowly does the sturdy and sound moral sense of the people win its way over them. The year 1905 was the best we have had in twenty years in its record of lynchings. Sixty-six persons met their deaths at the hands of mobs, many of them for offences which are not subject to the legal death penalty in any case. Two were killed for larceny or attempt at larceny. One met his death for an attempt to assault a white man. One was hanged under the charge of being an informer. The only charge in another case was race prejudice. In other cases it is now perfectly plain that it was mistaken identity. Down at the heart of the whole trouble lies a light regard for human life. Men are not lynched in solemn

protest against sin, but in feverish hate, under sharp excitement, when their executioners are least capable of determining what should be done. A few years ago, about fifteen miles from my own home, a negro was burned alive. There were many who were sadly sorry, but thought it very necessary to teach the negroes a lesson. Within ten days the same offence with which he was charged was committed in the same town, and the very next day after his death there appeared grave reason to think he was not the guilty party at all. In the last twenty years, 3,000 persons have been so killed in this country.

In the year 1905, 9,980 persons committed suicide in this land. And that was a marked increase over preceding years. In 1899, there were 5,300; in 1900, 6,700; in 1901, 7,200; in 1902, 8,200; 1903, 8,600; 1904, 9,200. A great many people are sure that such offences are committed only in times of insanity, but they violate the law of God, and they would not be committed if we held life in such regard as we ought.

Murders have increased also. There were recorded 9,212 in 1905, against 8,482 the year before. You will realize something of the meaning of all this as it bears on the sixth commandment when you recall that in the year of this writing

more than 19,000 persons are known to have met violent death in this country either at their own hands or at the hands of their fellow men. Of those which are thus recorded, about 100 are known to have been innocent, or unavoidable, issuing from no malice. But nearly 150 were infanticides, wherein little children were ruthlessly murdered. And these are only the crimes which are known. Only God knows how many men were brought to their death by the wrath of their fellows, who covered up their offence. Only God knows how many children, unwelcomed at their coming, were destroyed by those who should have greeted them and rejoiced in their coming.

The true idea of murder involves malice and disregard of the rights of others. In the very chapter after this law was given, solemn capital punishment was commanded. There come times when a man surrenders his right to life, and when the proper authorities in the proper way may take it from him. The wickedness of murder does not consist in the wrong done to the murdered man, but in the attack that is made on the prerogative of God. Man is made in His image, and whoever strikes a blow at that image, offends Him whose is the image. And it is He whose earliest law in this matter is, "Whoso sheddeth

man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." That is not ceremonial law, it is not Mosaic law, and it has not been abrogated. The reason for it still exists. No man ever forfeits his right to justice, but he has the same right to suffer it as to receive it.

As the command does not forbid capital punishment, so it does not forbid war, righteous war, and there is such war. Many of the wars of the past have been iniquitous, but many of them have been the very work of God, bringing justice to the oppressed and accomplishing great purposes for the race of men. They need involve no malice, and when they do, they become murder. Their grave peril, even when they may be righteous in their purpose, we need not be told when we learn of the wrongs which have accompanied every such strife. I do not forget that there is much argument about both these matters, which are not offences against the commandment, as I read the word of God and history. I have no zeal to make argument now. There are more momentous matters, which touch our own lives, about which we must think.

Of these matters, this is the first—There are many indirect ways of disregarding the value of human life. It is amazing to note how difficult it

is to secure the passage of laws which make for the protection of life, especially child life. In 1802, the first bill was introduced into the British Parliament forbidding the all night labour of children under nine years of age in the textile factories of England. The owners and stockholders of that industry made a hard fight against it, insisting that they would be compelled to leave England, if they were not allowed to employ these children. It was frankly admitted that such work stunted their bodies and prevented their mental development, that it took from them their chance to study and to be fitted for the duties of manhood, but it was still insisted that only so could the industry be made to prosper. Finally the law passed and it became impossible for any nine year old child to work all night in a factory. Parents were much incensed because they wanted the money which the babies could earn. That seems very remote to us. It was one hundred years ago. But I have followed few harder fights in a state legislature than the one that had to be made to secure a law preventing the all day or all night employment of boys and girls under fourteen years of age. Certain factories in the state concerned assured the committee that they would certainly leave the state if they were not allowed

to employ these children. They were asked if it did not affect their bodies and minds adversely, and replied that they supposed it might, but if their parents did not look after that, and if they were willing to do the work, they could not see what business it was of the legislature and a few troublesome reformers; beside which, the business could not be made to pay unless cheap labour like this could be employed. While the bill was under discussion, I chanced to sit at a table at a public eating house, next to one where men sat speaking of the bill. One denounced it bitterly. He said he had occasion to employ a good many children at different times in the year, and he could not see why he should not employ girls of ten and eleven, since he always had to pay the older ones a great deal more money. One of his friends asked him how these little ones stood it. "Oh," he replied, "of course it does not take long to wear them out, but you never have any trouble finding more." The bill, with its stringent inspection features, and its rigid age limit, finally passed, with only three votes against it. But one who was on the bench of the legislature just behind the speaker and saw it all, told me afterwards that it was pitiful to see how many men had important calls out of the hall just before the

roll call, or as their names were approached, and so escaped voting. Popular opinion would not allow them to vote against the bill, but they were not brave enough to vote for it, and manifest a higher regard for child life than for business.

A similar disregard for life appears in the effort necessary to secure the passage of laws regulating the amount of space that may be covered by a building. It was found in one of our cities, for example, that the average tenement building covered ninety per cent. of the lot on which it stood. Such a condition utterly forbids reasonable light and air for the tenants. There must be many inside and dark rooms in any such building, and that means death or sickness. An ordinance was introduced requiring a much larger percentage of the lot to be left unoccupied. There was immediate opposition. You can guess on what ground. The City Homes Association asked, "Is not this added space needed for pure air and abundant light?" The opponents admitted that it is, but insisted that with values as they are in the city you cannot make a building pay unless you put so many rooms in an apartment, and so many apartments on the lot. They said people would rather have more rooms and less light and air. They were

asked whether there was not greatest mortality where buildings were crowded, and insufficiently lighted and aired. They said it doubtless was so, but that did not alter the fact that you could not make the building pay unless you used more of the space than the ordinance permitted. It was evident that the argument would defeat the ordinance, and its friends receded from their position and accepted a compromise. A Brooklyn tenement proprietor said a little while ago that the whole thing resolves itself into this, whether a tenement house keeper is willing to take seven per cent. and save his soul, or demand twenty-five per cent. and lose his soul.

Jacob A. Riis's story of Mulberry Bend before and after deserves to become a staple argument. In 1897 there was in it a murder a week, and there were so many deaths that its rate was 170 to the thousand, while the death rate of New York was between nineteen and twenty to the thousand. Determined men took hold of the Bend, tore out its crowded tenements, saw to the building of better ones, with more light and air, let in the air and the sun by a small park where children may play, transformed old Mulberry Bend, and for six years there has been no murder, and no suicide, and the death rate has gone

to the normal rate of the city. Nor has there been a consequent increase of crime elsewhere. It has been a sheer destruction of crime by the light and air cure. And yet it was a long and hard fight to get these horrible holes of vice destroyed. The reformers were fought at every step as visionaries, and impracticables, by the owners of the wretched dens where people existed, and by politicians who did not want their clientele disturbed. Mr. Riis one day took a woman of Christian spirit with him to see one of the places which his soul loathed. She made the tour and came out sick of heart. He said, "Madam, it will be easy for you to correct all that." "For me?" she exclaimed, "how can I do anything about it?" "Madam, the building belongs to you, and you get all the rentals." And spite of her horror at the evil it took her some time to overcome first her own fear of the loss of the revenue and then the opposition of her family and her lawyers, and order the place torn down and replaced with a decent house. When it touches pockets, men find they do not care so much for human life as they do for their revenues. But let every property-owner know of a surety that in all moral decency he must share the shame and responsibility for sin if he shares

the profit of it. Let every man who professes the name of Christ keep himself clear of the business of ruining men.

The commandment comes into still closer relation to our lives when we hear Jesus' reading of it. He puts it where the meaning ought to be, in the inner life. Not many men lay violent hands on their fellows. Does it seem a great many murders, 9,200 in one year? Yes, but do not forget that more than seventy million people were concerned. How few there were after all! There is a high and strong regard for human life, thank God. But where does murder start? Not in the knife nor in the poison. It starts in the heart of hatred. And Jesus says it with startling clearness:—"Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that every one of you who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment." It is there that murder begins; it is there that the wickedness of it appears. And there we fall into much condemnation. You say you hate some man; he has done you or yours a great injury; he has wronged you bitterly, and you hate him. Then how will you reckon with Jesus' word? You would not lift your hand to injure him? You

would never think of taking his life? No, but you have the seed which in another man grows and bears that fatal fruit. And if it does not so grow in your own heart, it is of the grace of God and not of your goodness. You say he is unrepentant, that he is brazen in his sin. Then God pity him, for while he is so he cannot be forgiven. But as for you, you do not aid his punishment by the sin of hatred. You can forgive him, while still he cannot receive the forgiveness. As the mountain can send down its streams of sweet and refreshing water, though the plain may refuse to receive it. Let the mountain do its share, if it do not accomplish its purpose; it cannot control the plain. Let your heart do its share; let it forgive, let it bury its hate, let it cast out its murderous seed, even if it may not correct the wrong in the life of the offender. Do you not remember which disciple it was who knew Jesus best, who lay on His breast at supper, and caught most clearly the light of His love? It was that apostle, who, at the end of a long life of service, as he neared the close, wrote these ominous words, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." You stand by the scaffold and see the poor wretch led to his death. You pity him, you condemn him. And you walk away from the scaffold, after his soul is ushered into

the presence of the Judge, hating some man in your heart. How do you differ from him? He hated and that hatred had no restraining hand laid on it, no long line of man-regarding ancestry lay back of him, no long-taught self-control throttled that hate, or shut it in. So it leaped out and dealt the death-blow. The same hatred in your heart is held back, like a wild beast that cannot burst the chains that bind it. But it is the same wild beast, with the tiger blood in its veins, only that the good providence of God has given you chains to bind it. You walk about free in the sight of men. Does not God see two scaffolds that day, where two wild beasts are put to death? One came crashing out and devoured its foe; the other had all the venom of the first, but did not break its chains.

What can you do? Better chain the tiger, a million times better chain the tiger in your own heart, and not let him out. Murder in the heart wrongs only yourself. But a million times better than chaining is the killing of that tiger in your heart. Choke back your hatred? Yes, let it not flame out against your enemy. But choke that hatred until it dies. You say you cannot? Think that over before you say it. You cannot be forgiven until you will forgive, and you cannot forgive. Then God who made you and who

made the condition of your forgiveness must bear the eternal blame for your banishment from Him. My brother, it is not so. You and I and all men can forgive, and must forgive. Is it hard? Yes, but hatred is harder, and brings more misery in its train. Is anything more bitter than the feeling of revenge, of getting even? What disappointments it brings; how little satisfaction it ever brings; what bad taste it leaves in the mouth after the sweetest fruit of revenge is eaten! And on the other hand, we gain nobility by forgiveness, by replacing hatred with love. We have not got far in our love of our neighbour as ourselves, but every section of that road has been one of increasing happiness. The ultimate joy of the world lies in the true spirit of forgiveness, not in successful hatred. If therefore, in your heart this day you find malice towards any enemy, no matter how he has wronged you, if there you find an unforgiving spirit you are on the way to unhappiness, not to peace. For in that spirit the law of God is violated, and therein is deepest unhappiness.

The commandment comes to these two practical duties. It demands first that we keep our estimate of human life thoroughly Christian. We and our fellows are made in the image of God, and that image is imperilled or disregarded at

our peril. We violate the law when we condone the taking away of the life of men. We violate it when we argue about the necessity for exploiting the few for the sake of the many, or the sacrifice of the life of one class for the sake of another. What Jesus thinks of human life we may guess from what He did to redeem it. We are required to keep our estimate of life worthy of that profession.

And that is the second duty—to catch the spirit of love for men which Christ displays. No law can control the matter. Law may control my hand, and prevent my dipping it in your blood, but no civil law can drive hate out of my heart. No determination of my own can do it. Nothing can do it but the putting in its place of something stronger and better. That something is the love which thinketh no ill, the love of that whole thirteenth of First Corinthians. It comes into our lives from connection with Jesus Christ, and when it comes it is like the sunlight that comes into your darkened room and drives out the darkness with no noise and no clamour, but gently and surely. Every man who learns in the school of Christ to love his neighbour as Christ loves himself, keeps the commandment and is blest.

VIII

PRESENT DAY PURITY

(*The Seventh Commandment*)

Thou shalt not commit adultery.—EXODUS 20 : 15.

OUR studies have brought us to this seventh commandment, with its prohibition of impurity. The Hebrew word used covers all forms of moral uncleanness. It calls for a pure life from within outward. It means little that the outer life be pure if the inner heart be dripping with wickedness. In the coarser forms of the sin here forbidden the vice seems to flourish more among so-called civilized nations than among the uncivilized. Perhaps that is because of the higher standard of the moral life, and perhaps it is because of the greater restrictions which are thrown around the family and the personal life, so that violations are recognized and recorded. But the prevalence of impurity both in the inner heart of men and in their outer lives is beyond argument. There is room for rebellion against the quiet assumption of a great many that it has swept all men or most men into its current. When one of our prominent men was tried for the

shame of which he was proved guilty, his scoundrelly lawyer, with a leer at the jury, bade them remember that every man in the land was guilty of the same offence but had covered his sin. It is little short of monstrous that one of our best papers, reviewing an edition of Montaigne's essays should blandly apologize for his filthiness in personal life, declaring that he only expressed without prudery the opinion most men hold regarding the relation between men and women. Against that, decent men may well rebel.

And yet one of my brethren who is a careful observer has said in many places that if he could cure the present generation of only one sin and that the one which he counted the most damning and most prevalent, he would not begin with liquor nor with dishonesty ; he would begin with social vice and the evil heart out of which it proceeds. I cannot gainsay such testimony, while I repudiate the suggestion that purity is rare and impurity the prevailing law of life. There is need that one shall speak delicately and strongly even of the coarse vice which gains favour with some if it be not named. One must plead for a pure heart even when there is danger that the very plea will stir up impure depths. The word much needs to be said. Much ruin has been

wrought in history because men fell into the mire of this sin. Some of our great literature has issued from the protest of clean men against uncleanness. Homer's Iliad is the story of the rebellion of a people, not against the mere carrying away of Helen, but against the breaking of the family bond which that sin involved. The Odyssey is the story of the strong stand taken by a pure woman for a clean life and against all impurity. From the beginning, the family has been the unit of society and its preservation has been of first importance. But the seventh commandment preserves the family for us. There can be no true family life which does not regard it. With that commandment the race rises out of animalism, and becomes human.

But the meaning of the commandment is not exhausted when it protects the family integrity. Jesus read its meaning for us in terms of the inner life. He found its meaning in the heart and the thoughts. From within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts. Making us pure in heart, He trusts the purity of our lives. And not only because it preserves the family, not only because of Jesus' reading of the meaning of the sin, but because of the nature of the sin, the word is needed. All the finer manhood, all the finer

womanhood dies in the sin of moral uncleanness. No sophistry can overcome the inexorable law. There is no sin which grips the whole life as it does, and damns every endeavour after godliness. All the specious arguments with which coarse and weak men befool themselves about the wickedness of the evil are houses of straw before the fires of the great woods, when the facts of common observation are brought to bear on them. Take your Tennyson and read again the quest of Lancelot for the Holy Grail. Remember his guilty love for Guinevere, and hear him tell why he could not see the Holy Grail, though he sought it far and long. He says he could not see it, for

> "In me lived a sin,
> So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,
> Noble and knightly in me twined and clung
> Round that one sin."

This is the Upas tree among the sins. You know the story of that strange tree in Java. It exudes a deadly poison, and so fatal is it that the early travellers told that birds could not fly over it without falling under its spell to their death. Its shade cast on animals meant their ruin. It was deadly and deathly. The wise men of our own day tell us the first stories went beyond the fact, that a bird may fly over it and

live, but it may not alight in its branches without bearing away with it some of its baneful influence. The early stories arose in the fact that it will grow in valleys so low and so unreached by the sun that the gases formed there are never purified and no animal life is possible. Uncleanness is the Upas tree of sins. It kills the best in man; even his thoughts with which he would mount up into the heavens bear the curse with them. It exudes a deadly poison for the ruin of those who are about. Every filthy man brings filth to other lives that but for his would be clean. It is a sin of the unlighted valleys of the life of men, where gases are noxious and deadly. It cannot bear the purifying rays of the Sun of righteousness. It binds the wings of men. It puts chains on their better nature.

The sinner never gets away from his sin. He is a David, with one misstep, one gross animal sin, and a lifetime of repentance. He is a Tarquin, with one hour of guilty passion and a lifelong banishment from purity and goodness and home. Let any man who counts it defensible to practice impurity declare if he will publish his conduct to the world, and we shall know if there be aught but shame in the sin. Such sins revealed blast a man, and banish him from morally

decent society. In our study of the sixth commandment, we noted the sad suicide of thousands of men and women. Do I need to add that not a few of these have gone to their death because they found themselves under the grip and shame of moral uncleanness? "One more unfortunate, weary of breath, rashly importunate, gone to her death!"—I used to say it as a schoolboy, declaiming it as though it were poetry. But many a time in my manhood the lines have come to me as I have known of a half-heard splash yonder in the river, or a poison so quietly taken that even near friends do not know of it. What lies back of all that? The same story of shame and sin, the same grip of the sin of uncleanness, which seems so strong that no power on earth or in heaven can break it. And then men tell us that it is impossible to have a city without places of social iniquity! It will be impossible so long as we let it be impossible, but so soon as we care for decency and integrity and clean lives, it will not be impossible.

It chances that I have intimate knowledge of the movements for the prevention of the handling of vicious literature. I could not tell you, if it were wise that I should, how prevalent that offence is. You would not endure the things

which are true, of the money invested, of the tons of literature overtaken by the vigilant inspectors. It is not simply that mature people encourage the making and selling of these vile sheets and books, but that they contaminate young people and children wherever it is possible. Thus they make a market for their nefarious wares. In a beautiful city of one of our states, it was found that there were evil influences at work, whose source could not be discovered. At last an official who is skilled in such matters was called in. He found that an evil minded lad had brought to the school one copy of a vile pamphlet. The boys and at last even the girls had secured copies of it, typewritten and hand-copied, until every child in the school, five hundred of them, had been befouled by it. Not one of the parents could be found who knew of it. It had simply wrought its ruin because they were not watchful. None of those children will ever escape the influence under which they were thus brought. The wickedness of which I speak is to be found in every city, and widely throughout the country. Let me make strong appeal to parents to see to the matter. They will find themselves powerless in presence of it. It is organized far beyond their reach. But they

can help to put it out, and to save their own and other children, by letting the first signs of it be known wherever they are seen.

We are in a period of reaction against the erotic literature which for a time seemed to flood our stores. There are vile books still published, and there are some ready to defend them, to speak about their realism, to defend their being so true to life. So is any filth true to life—true to filthy life. Much of the literature which is defended as so clean and strong because it speaks out so freely, books which I need not name, much of it is the product of a befouled mind or a mind that has lost its sense of decency. It is encouraging from time to time that a play has been withdrawn because it passes the limit of decency. The author will make capital of it, but when a man is proud of his evil heart, there is no preventing his boasting. Men and women who love to pretend great liberty of thought, and so claim the right to sit down to a prurient play, will prate still more, and some will read or see the plays who would never have thought of doing so but for the opposition.

But of all the arguments which are used to defend such defilement, none is more disgusting and more impudent than the pious quoting of

the word, "to the pure all things are pure." Are we then to think that if a man is pure everything he looks upon is pure for him? Then if a man is honest, everything he looks on is honest, and if he sees a thief carrying off your goods, it becomes an honest act thereby? The words mean in common sense only this, that if a man is pure down at the depths of his heart, he is able to resist all impure influences and come out from them still pure. Doubtless there are persons to whom the suggestive stories and paintings which are so exploited by their defenders have lost their moral peril. It is idle to pretend that they have lost such peril for all men. Let them be saved for those who can see them safely. Let our public galleries and our public prints be exempted from them. It is hard enough for many men to be pure and clean; let not others for their own pleasure throw temptations in their way.

There are not many evil influences more insidious than the laxity of the marriage bond. There are some good legal safeguards thrown around it. More are needed. There is danger even in the effort to safeguard it by law, that marriage will become a merely legal and civil contract. Doubtless much of the shame of our divorce courts issues from the feeling that since

the state makes the bond, the state can break it. Let it be clear that there is vastly more in the marriage relation than the act of the state. The true bond is not made by the state. Marriage, when it is what it should be, is the blending of two lives according to the wish and purpose of God—it is nothing short of that. We have learned to scoff at the saying of our fathers that marriages are made in heaven. We are none the better for any lower theory of their origin. Certainly marriages that do not grow out of love, that have other arguments, without love, are mockeries of marriage. And love, honest, pure love of man for woman and woman for man, is like all noble love; it is from God. When He blends heart to heart and hand to hand, there is true marriage. The state only seals the vow.

The prevailing ideas of marriage are too lax, too easy-going. A boy and a girl can leave home quietly one day, and give to each other vows of life until death do them part, keep it secret from their parents, and live the wretched lie of a single life when they are married, then disclose their relation and have it counted a rare joke. Vows so easily made are easily unmade. In such light taking of vows is social ruin. Young people who hardly know each other, who

have not found out their true characters, may now slip into these vows as readily as they may make an engagement for a dance or an excursion. Silly young girls and beardless youths assert their devotion for each other against the counsel of parents and have defenders among their equally young friends, who point to their honeymoon happiness as evidence of their own wisdom, but forget to point to their after wretchedness as evidence of their folly. Young people between whom there can be nothing in common at the depths of their nature join themselves for life without that solemn care or that solemn sense of responsibility that befits so important a relation. Be sure that no laws will ever cure such folly. No law can teach a young man the responsibility of the family life so that he accepts the relationship soundly and soberly, without delirium or foolish fancy. No civil law can make a young woman fit to be the head of a home, able to perform its duties, to weave those bonds which bind the parts of the family together. Divorce is not a cause of the difficulty. Rather, it is caused by the difficulty. The true causes lie farther back. They root at the last in selfishness on one side or both, the loss of self-control, the ideal of pleasure rather than happiness, a refusal to bear hardship

for love's sake, and so the loss of love—selfishness at the heart of it all. And laws cannot cure selfishness. Only better training of boys and girls in homes, a larger infusion of common sense, a return to sane speech and feeling about marriage, an acceptance of the divine ideal of the relationship, can work ultimate cure. But laws may do something.

For one thing, it is manifest that it ought to be made more difficult for marriage vows to be taken. The requirement of a license is not the law in some states, and it was opposed in some where it is now the law. But we might wisely require such publicity as shall make the secret marriages impossible. Whether it be by publishing the bans for two or three weeks in some public way, or by forbidding the issuance of a license except under conditions of its publication for a given length of time before its validity is insured, or in other ways, is not so much the question, as that it shall become impossible for secret marriages to occur, or for any man or woman to enter the marriage relation without full knowledge on the part of those who have a right to know all the facts. That implies that marriage is more than a personal agreement. It is a social fact, and social rights may never fairly

be left out of account. Before the personal agreement is consummated, society has right to know and recognize it.

Having made it more difficult to form the marriage relation, it should be made very much more difficult to gain release from it. We are disgraced by the fact that one in every five hundred persons in this country is a divorced person. Some of them are properly divorced. The marriage bond may be rightly and entirely set aside in presence of the sin of violation of this commandment. Of that I do not speak. But what are the feelings of a man who loves the family and believes it is essential to society, as he thinks that there are forty-two grounds for divorce among the various states of the union? Over against that, set the explicit statement of Jesus, that for divorce properly there is but one ground. There may be many reasons for what we may call legal separation. With that I have little to do now and little concern. But I have much concern with the reasons for the absolute divorce which sets a man and a woman free from one bond and permits them to form another. Infidelity to the marriage relation constitutes such an absolute severing of the bond. It is as though it had not been, save for the scar of pain on the heart of

the offended one. But if there be reasons why two cannot agree, or if it be to the ruin of the happiness of either for the two to live together as man and wife, let the law of the state furnish right to separate, but let there be no annulling of the bond of marriage. The word of God and the nature of the case utterly forbid it. Let there be made plain distinction between divorce and separation, and let those who are separated for any other cause than the great offence which blasts the offender and marks him for banishment of decent society, let them know that they are yet married and one in God's sight, and not free to assume other vows.

We are not forgetting the good facts which are so ready at hand—the thousands of homes which are glad and bright, where love is the law. It is well to remind ourselves of the fact that the number of golden weddings celebrated each year is almost equal to the number of divorces, and that the silver marriages far outnumber the divorces. If ever you feel depressed or saddened, think on that. When you meet men who are arguing that marriage has failed to bring happiness, remind yourself how many there are who bear glad testimony to its benediction. It is true that 7,700 husbands deserted their wives in New York City

last year. But it is true that fifty times as many were drawn into nearer covenant as the year went on, living better, manlier lives because of the marriage bond.

Out of it all, what are the lessons? Two. First, the commandment is not kept if we do not think pure thoughts. Whatever the outer life may be, the commandment requires that. Abstain from every appearance of evil. One of my medical friends claims that he can walk along the street and single out every man who habitually thinks impurely. He says it is in his face. Can that be true to a man who is wise in such matters? How much more must it be true to Him who is able to see through our lives, and not merely to see our faces? No man can treasure evil thoughts and let them remain in his heart. They are like the plant that starts in the recesses of your porch, hid from your sight, but which presently begins to creep out into light. If the fountain be impure, be sure the stream will presently be fouled. No man can think foul thoughts, no man can meditate on things that are unworthy without paying the price for it in his manhood. Put away from you all filthy suggestions of every kind. They will flash through your mind, but you can put them out. How?

Not by some mere effort of your will. Jesus taught us the true way in His parable of the evil spirit that was in a man. The man drove it out one day, and cleaned out his heart, leaving it vacant and untenanted. Presently the spirit came again, and found the house empty and swept and garnished, and came in and took possession, bringing with him seven others worse than himself. The man's heart should have been tenanted with good spirits and there would have been no room for the evil spirit. How is a man to keep from impure thoughts? By thinking pure ones. Every man ought to have his mind so stored with clean thoughts, with the best thoughts of the best men, that he is not so impoverished he can think only the worst thoughts. No man can hinder the evil thought from creeping into his mind. Any man can keep it from staying there. For if it stay, it will work its damnation in due time.

This secondly. Keep pure associations. Evil communications corrupt good manners—so says the old version. The new makes it plainer still: "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." We would be strangely ignorant if we did not know it. There are some evil associations from which we cannot rid ourselves. There are evil-minded friends who love to spue out upon us

their own malicious suggestions. Against them we can only erect the barrier of aggressive purity. But those companionships which we may control we must control. And as it is perilous to have an evil companion, so it is dangerous to be one.

But what is our hope? Not in rules which some one may lay down in essays or out of them. No. Rather our hope is in the presence and power of Jesus Christ in our lives. He would make such evil impossible to us. Every man who makes a brave fight for the clean life with no scoundrelly argument for the right to be impure, which he would never grant to his wife or his sister, every woman who stands clean and sweet and pure in the midst of the world's evil, helps to keep the commandment in the lives of the tempted and the falling.

And is there hope for him who has fallen, whose life is stained? Is there hope for the woman who has fallen and bears the mark of the outcast? Ah, yes. For this sin, too, there is a fountain of cleansing. No sin so black that it cannot be taken from a repentant heart. If there be any man who loathes his sin and hates his shame, let him take the pardon of the crucified Christ, let him take the power of the ever living Christ, able to control the fiercest fires of passion and hold his life to its purity and strength.

IX

PRESENT DAY HONESTY
(*The Eighth Commandment*)

Thou shalt not steal.—EXODUS 20 : 15.

THERE are nimble-minded men who find ways of aligning this commandment with a denial of the right of private property. To most of us, without aggressively revolutionary theories, it plainly implies that right. What is mine is mine, what is yours is yours; and while I may get what is yours and make it mine, it must be in ways that take account of you and leave you gainer as well. If the thing that was yours becomes mine at your cost, I have somehow done violence to this commandment. Room is left, of course, for wide discussion as to the things which I may hold against you. There may be many things which men have claimed as their own, which could not fairly belong to any one man or set of men. There may be great commodities to which we have equal right from which I might hold you back by fraud or force. But if you have nothing, then I cannot steal it; and if no one has anything, then neither of us can steal it nor disregard his rights.

At first thought, we have come upon a commandment which does not bid fair to bear down very heavily on us. Whatever we may not be that is right and good, at least we are honest. We do not steal. Indeed, it is one of the good signs of the time that we resent a charge of dishonesty so vehemently. We are committed to that line of Pope: "An honest man's the noblest work of God." George Washington finds response in us all when he prays that whatever he may become or may do, he may attain that which he counts the most enviable title, "An honest man."

And yet we have found most of these commandments coming nearer home to us than we thought at first. It may be we shall find ourselves in poor relation to this one, once we look squarely at its meaning. There may prove to be little to resent in the saying of Hamlet to Polonius: "To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of a thousand."

Certainly if you think of what we may call the coarse forms of dishonesty, there is a great amount of it. The very locks and bolts on our doors testify to our fear of our fellow men. The safeguards which large institutions must throw around their most important positions, the bonds,

the guarantees, are not all explained by the natural wish to provide against failures in judgment which might cause loss. A painful amount of costly experience has revealed that the moral character of men requires these safeguards. It is true that some men are encouraged to dishonesty by this very surveillance. Suspect a man and you have taken the first step towards making him the evil doer you suspect him to be. Put a man in a position of trust and say to him, "We have every reason to suppose you are a thief, and will steal the coins which you receive, and here is this device and this plan whereby we mean to thwart your plan," and you have put some men on their mettle to beat your game by one of their own. That does not take away the necessity for such safeguards; it only reveals anew the amount of dishonesty there is hid away in the human heart. Our average recorded thefts and robberies in large ways amount to more than seven million dollars annually. Part of it is in forgeries, stealing the good name and credit of men. Part is in public offices. Most of it is in sheer betrayal of trusts. But the figures do not take account of petty dishonesties, burglaries, highway robbery, shoplifting, offences which men commit who have no chance to do the great

things. Nor do they take into account that which the moral sense of men would count stealing if the facts were known, but which is under cover of the law. Bradstreets reported once that only twenty per cent. of the business failures of a long period of years were traceable to legitimate causes, like undue competition or adverse conditions which were uncontrollable. Some were due to personal incompetence, but the great majority of business failures were to be traced to some form of dishonesty, not necessarily within the firm, but in some way involved.

Nor is it difficult to see how the spirit of dishonesty appears in the methods men adopt for getting release from the penalties of financial failure, where no dishonesty is charged. Our bankruptcy laws are necessary provisions for releasing of a man from immediate pressure. When a man has passed through the bankruptcy court, what has happened? Has his debt been wiped out? Yes, legally. But by no means morally. He may never be able to meet his obligations, but they hang over him until they are met. The court comes to his aid to set him free from present entanglements that he may be able to move freely in the settlement of claims. It is monstrous that men should take advantage of that release simply

for their own comfort. In that is dishonesty. A penitentiary warden told me once of a convict, whose story is illuminating. The man had been arrested for stealing ten thousand dollars. He fought the charge with much insulted dignity, but was found guilty. His term was a long one, and he was an exemplary prisoner. As he took advantage of the shorter term which his good behaviour brought him, he began to plan life after his release. He told the warden he meant to settle down and be an honest man. The past was gone. He wanted to find some good business opening where he could live down his reputation as a thief. As he unfolded his plans, the warden said, "Yes, that would be very well, but where can you get the money to begin the enterprise?" "Well," he replied, "of course I have the ten thousand I was put in here for." "You have?" exclaimed the warden, "Well, you ought to return it." "Return it? What I have been in here all these years for?" He had come to feel that the punishment blotted out the crime. That the inherent dishonesty of his heart was still there, he could not be brought to see.

Now, it is of first importance that we keep our moral eyes clear on all these matters. We are to make no mistakes because the amounts involved

are large. I do not know who wrote them, but I remember reading some time ago two verses which are poor poetry but which say an important thing:

"In olden times when people heard
Some swindler huge had come to grief,
They used a good old Saxon word,
And called that man a thief.

"But language such as that to-day
Upon men's tender feelings grates;
So people smile and simply say,
He—'rehypothecates.'"

There are some sins whose very bigness takes away their moral obliquity for us, and we find it difficult to call them by their right names. There is a manifest reaction to the better thought. James Russell Lowell is the prophet of our time:

"In vain we call old notions fudge,
And bend our conscience to our dealing;
The Ten Commandments will not budge,
And stealing will continue stealing."

We have gotten on somewhat when we have learned to call things by right names. In the hope that that is true, let us look about us to find the spirit of the times.

There are few sins more prevalent than that form of dishonesty which we call gambling. It

is one of the oldest forms of sin. Dr. Paton has said that he has never found a native in the South Sea Islands who is not a confirmed and expert gambler. The gaming of the Chinese is mentioned in their very oldest books. The earliest Egyptian books give hint of it. I do not know whether it is more prevalent now than it has been or not, but I know how shamefully we are offending in that regard, whatever our fathers did. In all grades of society the fever has spread. Children show the marbles they have won from their playmates, and their fathers compliment them on their shrewdness. Groups of small boys gather and throw dice for their pennies, or toss coins on their bets. Young men risk their wages on the outcome of a race which is itself dishonestly run, or on a ball game or on anything else. Women's card clubs lose their zest if prizes and small bets are not at stake. Men cannot sit down to a common game of any sort without betting on the outcome. In many cases it is the eager passion to get money easily, to increase one's income without increasing one's skill or effort—itself a ruinous passion. In many cases it is simply to put spice into jaded lives that are becoming inane for very lack of substance.

It is suggestive that the two current stories which are hailed as depicting accurately the "society" life of the day, one showing that life for America, the other for England, should both turn on gambling, social gambling. Mrs. Thurston's "The Gambler," is only a story of a society girl who moves among her kind and practices their customs. I count it a tract for the time, woefully needed, disgracefully needed. Mrs. Wharton's "House of Mirth" is the story of an American girl who gambles as all the rest of her set do, save that she keeps some semblance of decency about her. All this happens in the supposed smart set, from which no nation need expect much. Its people are the outer twigs in its life which are dying. Of themselves they are of no value and need not be reckoned. But they become a serious menace in that they suck into their circle occasionally lives which need not be ruined, and in that they are parasites on the true social body. It comes near us when we realize that their gambling is not a whit different from our own when we cannot enjoy an evening with friends without contests which leave them or ourselves poorer. There are indignant fathers who have broken social connections because their daughters have been dragged into debt to a sup-

posed hostess over a game of bridge whist. It needs to be plainly understood that the gambling which our police hunt out in the dens and dives of the city is quite as legitimate as the social gambling whose parties would be outraged if they were molested. It is all dishonest, if any of it is dishonest.

We have come upon bad days if we cannot get pleasure out of our games or out of events in which we participate without introducing the elements of gambling. If a company of men and women cannot get together without having to find their enjoyment in the possibility of leaving some one else poorer with no return, which is the essence of gambling, then we had better take stock of our manhood. That sort of thing weakens our moral fibre. See to what length it goes. When Mr. McKinley lay at the point of death, bets of one hundred thousand dollars in one city were hanging on his living at a certain hour or passing away before that time. His death was simply the object of a bet in the minds of some of our people. A certain father placed a debt of several hundred dollars with a sporting man to cover the life of his little girl who was lying in a hospital. Nothing is too sacred, once the gambling fever lays hold on one. Jerry MacAuley knew men

well, and saw the power of the grace of God in their lives as few men did, yet he said he had seen many a confirmed drunkard saved, many a libertine purified, many a thief made honest, but of all the gamblers who had come into his great mission, from men high in their dishonest profession to men who were addicted to gambling in its petty forms, of all the gamblers he had known, he could count on his fingers the number that had been saved.

It seems a peculiarly damning sin. For one thing it speedily loosens one's moral grip. Your drunkard will not defend drinking; your thief will not defend stealing; your liar will not defend lying. But gambling finds defence; attack it and you find its devotees standing up for it, thinking at any rate that it is no one else's business. That is the evil of it; it lowers one's moral tone. It even seems right to some who practice it. They talk large nonsense about there being an equivalent for the other man in the chance which he has to get something from you without leaving you the better, or about the fact that you agree to the chance to lose when you go into it, and it is your own affair if you lose. And the moral impossibility of its being made right to take from the other with no return

is lost sight of. Gambling gives moral strabismus. Not only does it do that, but it is fast ruining manly sports. Already it has almost robbed us of any pleasure there is in the running of horses. Only a most verdant man would risk the opinion that horse racing is clean and honest any longer. Betting has added reasons for dishonesty until no man can trust appearances. In the racing of horses there need be no evil, but even large good, but any moralist who cares for his standing with men takes that character in his hand when he says even so much as I have now said.

There are not a few who have the same feeling about athletic events. They are being made the occasion of so much risking of money that it is not far to the place when they will be influenced by that fact. Many of our colleges are discussing the dropping of intercollegiate athletics, because their students are caught in the swirl of the day and are becoming common gamblers. The loss or the illegitimate gain of the students is the least part of it. The lowering of the whole moral tone, the utter destruction of any fair sense of values, the fever of getting something for nothing, the disregard for moral distinctions —these are the real results.

For gambling is stealing, violates the whole spirit of this law. It disregards the rights of the other man. It seeks to get profit for one's self without return to the other man. He is to be left poorer for my advantage. One of my pupils once said, "Well, in any bargain, of course somebody is the poorer." I think he voiced a common feeling, but a most erroneous one. In any fair bargain, both parties are better off. You have a book and I have a dollar. When we exchange, that is because the dollar means more to you than the book does, so that you are better off when you have the dollar; but the book means more to me, so that I am better off when I have it. That is the A B C of trading. Gambling disregards this simple law. Moreover it seeks to gain for one's self without exertion of any sort. It leaves all the exertion to some one else and hopes to profit by that exertion. It takes another man's property, not as a gift, for it is counted won, and not with any recompense which leaves him the better.

We have been speaking of the lesser forms of the evil. I do not forget that it has larger and more complicated forms. The necessity for dealing in future conditions, the necessity for contracts which depend on prices that shall obtain

after months have passed, is not difficult to see. Such dealing and such contracts may be perfectly fair. This commandment says nothing about them. They involve an estimating of the future which may be verified or may fail, and there is an element of risk in any such transaction. So is there when a dealer buys his goods for the next season's trade. But when any man, or company of men, for the mere sake of personal gain or for vengeance on any enemy, combine to create artificial conditions which shall not represent fair and open movements of trade, either "bearing" the market and so forcing producers to receive less for their services than they should receive, or "bulling" the market, forcing consumers to pay more for their supplies than they should pay, why, that is stealing. I use no technical language, because I know very little of that language, but as a teacher of morals, I speak that which I well know. And all men who have to do with businesses which call for the estimating of future conditions and the making of contracts months ahead, know how narrow is the frontier between this legitimate business and the illegitimate abuse of it. You need not be told that it is the scandal of mere betting on the prices of grain and commodities in the future that has hedged

the honest business with so many burdensome laws. There are shops in all cities in which men and women are risking their small sums with no shadow of honesty in their purpose. They would not know wheat if they saw it, and have no place to put away a bushel or a bucket of it, if they had it delivered to them. For them there is no shadow of defence. They contribute nothing to the good of the commercial world. But men who have a large place in the commercial world need to be on their guard constantly against mere gambling, which is ruinous to our commercial life as truly as the petty gambling of so many homes and clubs and games is ruinous to our social life.

Think of some other forms which the spirit of dishonesty takes in our day. How many people are looking for a place where they can put in a little and get out a great deal! How the increase is gotten they either do not know or they are readily deceived by specious explanations. How many wildcat schemes there are for getting something for nothing! It all comes back to that. Why do we find goods; even foods for little children, adulterated? Would it not seem that milk, at least, might be safe, and that men who hold in their power the lives of little children need not be asked to be honest? Or drugs—must we be on

our guard that our very lives be safe at the hands of men who make the compounds which are for our healing? Who does not know the reason for it all? Suppose water were more expensive than milk, or suppose the substituted drug were not cheaper than the required one? It is dishonesty, the effort to get something for nothing. Or note our rush for bargains. See how much it means to some that an article is offered at less than its cost. Is that because we are poor and must save money? Sometimes, doubtless, as sometimes there are fair offers of the sort. There come seasons of the year when the profit of certain goods is gladly forfeited that they may be removed. But what is there to explain the craze of some persons for bargains? Why are some people singled out by their friends as peculiarly able to find bargains? Why do some wish that they were better shoppers? In one of the religious papers a few years ago, a quantity of lace was advertised for sale. The price was so very low that explanation was given. It was that the lace was made in Ireland by the peasants who live so poorly that they are glad to get seventeen cents a day for their work. Yes, and we congratulate ourselves that we are able to buy this that we need so cheap. And we even befuddle ourselves

with supposing that it is none of our business. But keep in mind this common fact, that when you buy anything for less than it is really worth, you are profiting by some one else's misfortune. You may not be at all to blame for that but the realization may well temper the exultation with which such a condition is many times greeted. It would be well that it be so put before us that a bargain would have no temptation for us unless we know all the terms of it, and know that we are not selfish in our enjoyment of it. It is the meaner part in us which finds pleasure in the opportunity to profit by a bankrupt sale, gaining by the loss of another man.

What shall be said of the dishonesty of living beyond one's means, of the creating of obligations which cannot be met? It is not the vice of the rich alone. It is sadly the vice of young men and women, who adopt the standard of living set by some one else. A friend with larger income or fewer demands does a certain thing, buys this or goes into that; shall not I do the same? Then comes the long story of debt and dishonour, and many times dishonesty that is undeniable. But it is dishonesty from the first. It involves contracts which one cannot meet.

A young man, far away from the city, looking

back into its life and sitting in kindly judgment on it, has written me a letter, which sums up what many of us feel about city life. My memory is not charged with exact words, but he says this :—The thing that is lacking is old-fashioned honesty. People are greedy and are seeking the short cut to wealth, a path always full of pitfalls. A man from the country usually comes to the city honest. He soon finds a great demand on his purse, things which were luxuries in a village appear necessities in a large city. He soon begins to do little things which are dishonest but which he sees others doing. He gets caught in the rush and hardly notices that he is doing them. Not many people in a city will steal, my friend says. That is repugnant to them. But to pay a city employee to have a street in the way of a factory closed, or a county officer to assess one's property low—that is different. A city or a county is an intangible thing, and to take from it is hardly stealing. In this way our officials are corrupted and new reason is given in their corruption for dishonesty in personal relation to the city. Few men are willing to pay the assessed taxes because they feel sure that much of their money will never get to legitimate service in the city life. But that very fact increases the argu-

ment which makes dishonesty possible. My correspondent shows shrewd observation of the facts. There needs to be writ large over the door of every public office in this city, over the desk of every business house, over the charter of every institution and corporation:—Thou shalt not steal. If it were there, and were obeyed, the problems of our city and social life would be put far on towards their solution.

A few years ago I put to more than a score of men the direct question: What do you consider the chief need of the present day? The men were all eminent in their lines—political, legal, medical, commercial, ecclesiastical. It was startling to have them all give the same reply, without the slightest knowledge that others were being asked. The mayor of the second city in the country worded that common reply most tersely: "The need of the present day is just common honesty." All enlargements on that answer left it intact. In all departments that is the declared need. Another worded it: "The trouble to-day is not infidelity but unfidelity, a slack sense of personal obligation." At that time, he foretold with striking exactness revelations in great trust agencies which have since saddened all honest hearts and outraged the moral sense of the nation.

Men who would not steal a penny from your pocket will allow themselves to receive exorbitant salaries out of trust funds, and will be parties to administrative extravagance which is nothing short of robbery. When their attention is called to it, they are quick to try correcting it, and they even make certain sorts of restitution. Much that has been taken cannot be restored, more's the shame. The bad effect on commercial standards cannot be overcome. The lowering of moral tone cannot be corrected by tardy and enforced restitution. Recently I talked with a large manufacturer and quoted to him as a jest the saying that is going the rounds, that it is no longer a question whether the constitution follows the flag, but whether restitution follows the swag. He did not even smile. He is a leader in the political reform of another city, and his heart is sore. "Restitution?" he said. "I would to God there were some way of restoring to us what we have lost beyond money value!" Robbing the city by "honest graft" even has its defenders. Charging the city double prices; standing in with departments or with the buyers of large business houses—that is counted legitimate.

Do not misunderstand all this. I am not of those who cry there are no more honest men, that business and government are rotten at heart.

The overwhelming body of office holders are thoroughly honest both in personal character and in regard for the rights of the people. There is a great body of men high in public life against whom no fair charge can be brought. So is the main current of commercial life clear and pure. Recent events in the public records, elections, investigations, disclosures, reveal much evil, but they reveal the soundness of heart of the rank and file of men. But after a firm believer in his fellows and his land has said his strongest word, there remains the reigning sin of dishonesty in things large and small. Not a man reading this line who at some point in his life is not being robbed, and that without redress.

But I am sure all this must seem rather large and vague to some readers. What can you do about it? First of all, of course, whatever others about you are, you can be thoroughly and scrupulously honest in your regard for the rights of others. If there is any habit of your life that weakens your high regard for those rights you can break it off. If you are in any office and have been making use of articles which are not fairly yours to use, or have been gaining for yourself information which is meant for your firm and not for yourself, you can cease all such things. You say they are small things. Yes,

and you are a small member of the commonwealth, but if you do not abstain from small dishonesties, why should a man of large responsibilities abstain from large dishonesties?

Then, you can take a fair and right view of your neighbour's rights, looking upon them as you know Christ would have looked on them. That will cure us of that selfishness which is the underlying fact of all dishonesty. You can set your regard for manhood above your regard for things. In the Paradise Lost there are few finer touches or touches truer to the facts than that wherein Milton pictures Mammon as the least erect of all the angels even before he fell, "who went about with eyes rather for the pavement of the heavenly streets, trodden gold," than for the high and noble beauties of the place. You can guard your life from getting so under the spell of possessions that you can be brought to overlook the rights of others for your own advantage. For even Christ pleased not Himself.

But more important than all that:—You can be absolutely honest with God. Honesty with others will take care of itself. All our arguments in behalf of unfairness proceed on the opinion that what we have is our own. In truest sense it is not our own, and we are not free to do with it what we will. Over our claim there is

the double claim of society and of God. I have no right to waste my money. I have no right to throw it in the river, because that robs society which it ought to serve through me. I have no right to use it for the worse part of my life, to buy with it anything that degrades me or develops the lower side of my life, because that robs my better life and again robs society which has right to have me at my best and not at my worst. But I have no right to hold it for my own low pleasures because that robs God who has higher claim on it and on me. The old prophet called out over the people of Israel: Will a man rob God? And when the people indignantly replied that they had not robbed God, the prophet replied with words true to this day, Ye have robbed Me in tithes and in offerings. The commandment covers the regard we owe to the rights of God in ourselves and our possessions. There are many followers of Christ who are scrupulously honest with their grocers and their bakers who keep no fair standing with God who has first claim on them. The time which He claims, the money which He calls for, the strength which He demands in His kingdom, the very life of the servant whom He has redeemed—these are withheld from Him. In all our reckoning of our honesty, let us not deceive ourselves that fairness

in the small things of human relations will compensate for unfairness in the higher things.

And after all, no better service is rendered to the race of men than the example of clear, sun-clear honesty. There are some of you will never be wealthy, and who will never be known in a wide circle of people, but who will leave a goodly heritage in the eyes of men, for they will count you honest men. They will know that in your hands the affairs of others will be safe; they will know that you may be trusted under guard and without guard. Let others found institutions, let them make great contributions to public welfare—it is well and we rejoice, but let every man bow in gratitude for a life that bequeaths to society and the church a better spirit of honesty. Others of you will be wealthy. God bless you in it, but do you see to it that your wealth comes to you with no stain on it, and that it goes down to your heirs unstained. Let it be said of you that you at least were one man picked out of a thousand. For only so can the wish of Christ for your life be fulfilled. I am not now saying whether honesty is the best policy or not; I am only saying that for the servant of Jesus Christ it is the only policy, and by it alone can he serve that Kingdom which is founded on Him who is the Truth.

X

PRESENT DAY VERACITY
(*The Ninth Commandment*)

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.—Exodus 20 : 16.

THE eighth commandment which forbids stealing and this ninth commandment which forbids false witness belong together. They are both in the interests of honesty. The eighth commandment deals with honesty in possessions, the ninth commandment deals with honesty in communication.

This ninth commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," has had an interesting history. Two mistaken accents have been applied to it. There were some who laid stress on the word "against." "Thou shalt not bear false witness *against* thy neighbour," but false witness which was in his favour might be defended. That is, if the false witness which you bear is in the interests of kindness and charity, then this commandment was not to be considered. There were others who accented the last word. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy *neighbour*," but so far as any one else was concerned the commandment does not

apply. In those two mistaken accents there lie the roots for most defence of falsehood in any form. Here is a man who will do anything for his friend. He will bear any measure of false witness in his favour. That is the meaning of that first accent. Here is a man who will not cheat his friend, but must always be watched by either his enemy or a stranger. That is the second mistaken accent. You can trust him within his own immediate circle but out of that he needs to be watched. I have seen men flame up indignantly because a man has started a lie against a fellow club member. In college I have seen students to whom it was especially heinous to start a falsehood on a member of the same fraternity or literary society. Of course it was measurably wrong to do any such thing against any one, but this was a case of bearing false witness against your neighbour.

Well, there cannot be much doubt as to the scope of this commandment. It is one which determines the relation which we shall hold towards our fellows in the matter of communication. We are so bound in the same bundle of life that if you bear false witness in my favour because I am your friend, you are in that very fact bearing witness false to society, which is equally your neighbour. And also, if it seems to us that there is any man who is not our neighbour in the sense of this commandment, we need

to sit at the feet of Jesus, and let Him teach that the Samaritan, the outcast, the man farthest away from us, is a man with all claims of neighbourliness upon us. The commandment manifestly calls for a right relation, a relation of truthfulness between man and man. This principle may guide us in our thought of it, that it is the duty of every man to establish and maintain right relations between himself and his fellows, and so far as he has power between man and man. Anything of communication which affects adversely that relation is to be avoided. Whatever helps it and safeguards it is to be approved.

Trace for a moment the place falsehood has had in the history of men. Take it in Scripture alone. See how sin came into the world by the gateway of a falsehood. It was Satan's deception of our first parents by a partial truth which was itself a lie. The first murderer sought in utterly modern ways to cover up his sin with a lie. Almost every one of the great patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah—almost all of them were caught at some time in a lie, and they and their posterity suffered for it. When it comes to the Mosaic law falsehood has an unusually large place. Every effort is made to safeguard the people against a tendency to false witnessing. So far as falsehood is perjury in court of law we have considered it already in our study of the third commandment. Throughout

the Mosaic law, however, false witness does not necessarily involve a court. The law of libel is very plain, the starting of a rumour is condemned, so is the passing it in. One interesting item of the Mosaic law is that if a man bear false witness against another, then he is to suffer the penalty which he sought to bring upon the innocent man. The liar was to be a veritable outcast. His sin was made equal to a crime.

History after the Mosaic law has the same sinister line running through it. You remember Saul and his falsehoods to Samuel. You remember David. Hardly one of the men who form the line running through Scripture who has not somewhere this mark on him. Coming into the literature of the Scripture you find it equally. Some of the most heart-burdened Psalms are those of protest against falsehood. Some of the keenest Proverbs are against it. There is the very clear-cut saying, "A poor man is better than a liar,"—a proverb much needed this day if we do not believe it. If a man can become rich by sufficient and skillful amount of falsehood we think he is so much better off. The proverb is still true in spite of our opinion. The poor man is better at every point of consideration than a liar. There is the striking proverb, "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow." He is a maul in that he bruises the neighbour; he is

a sword in that the sharp edge of his lie cuts him to the heart; he is a sharp arrow in that he pierces his very life. Then there is perhaps the most striking proverb, "As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?" The proverb aims at those folly-stricken people who suppose that if only they are sufficiently in fun any amount of lying can be defended. The wise man characterizes such men well. They are like mad men, crazy, who cast firebrands, arrows and death. The starting of a malicious story even in sport is a far worse thing than setting fire to a man's house as a joke. When you pass out of the Proverbs into the prophets you find them in constant wrath against the falsehood of people in their dealing with God and of the other prophets who are misleading the people. Jesus Himself had the high title that He is the Truth. He came to bear witness to the truth. Men rejected Him because they would not hear the truth. His suffering was at the hands of liars. The epistles are charged with the warning against falsehood. In the Revelation we come out to the awe-inspiring word that all liars and those who love and make a lie are cast out from the presence of God into the lake that burneth.

But the demand for truth is not Scriptural alone. It comes out of the heart of things. All

society is involved when we begin to speak of falsehood. We are members one of another, and every falsehood strikes at the fellowship which we hold with each other. Ninety per cent. of the business of this country is done on credit, and the foundation of credit is character and trustworthiness. If most men were not honest the great business houses of New York would close in a fortnight. Make what safeguards you will, the fact is that there is not a firm in the city which could not be ruined if it were not walled about with the honesty of the great majority of men. So it is with truthfulness. There are three statements which present the facts of experience. First, all men are truthful some of the time. No man always lies. Secondly, most men are truthful most of the time. It is rare that there is any man the great preponderance of whose statements are not as reliable as we could ask them to be. Then, thirdly, some men are truthful all the time. There are a great many habitually truthful and reliable who yet have some one or two points of reserve, and you cannot be perfectly sure of them and they are not sure of themselves. At any rate, it is true that the prevailing fact in society is truthfulness. David said in his haste that all men are liars. We grow hasty about that sometimes also, and perhaps we bear false witness against society in the sweeping condemnations we make of it. The great mass of men

love the truth, honour the truth, tell the truth. It is the exception either among men, or in the life of each man, which endangers society.

Observe how one lie shakes confidence. It shakes your confidence in a great institution if you know that under a strain it can be led into a falsehood. Take a great newspaper, for example. We sometimes say that we never believe anything we read in a newspaper. Of course that is not accurate. We all believe nine-tenths if not ninety nine one-hundredths of what we read in a newspaper. Suppose, however, a paper is known to have deliberately misled its readers at some point where the interests of those concerned with it were involved. It was the time of a great election, and it was to its interest to deceive its readers as to the news it was receiving from over the whole country. As soon as that is discovered, all thoughtful men begin to discount its opinions. It has been caught in a lie. It has been caught in deceit. Confidence is at once shaken. Now the fact that there have been so many instances of that sort in our experience with newspapers has started this severe talk, which is so easy to take up and much of which is so unjustified, that a newspaper cannot be believed. Every time one reads in a newspaper a thing which one knows is not true, or finds there some maliciously false accent on an occurrence or finds some exaggerated statement, one's confidence in

the reliability of the entire paper, and unconsciously of all papers, is weakened.

On the other hand, the truth told under strain establishes confidence. When a man or a newspaper under great strain, when all personal interests are against it, is yet found telling accurately and plainly the truth, men may call the man a fool, or the paper suicidal, but all the same he and it will gain influence. I do not know what Englishmen will say about it to-day, but the time was when the London *Times* was the most powerful influence in the British Empire. The reason was that it would go to the uttermost parts of the earth to run down the man who had misled its editors or its reporters. If anything appeared in the London *Times* it might be erroneous because no one is omniscient, but it was known to be absolutely honest. It was the nearest to the truth which the paper could reach by any means within its power. Doubtless it was exceedingly dull and is still so. Doubtless it was very heavy and not so widely read as it might have been if it had lied a little more in its headlines, even while telling the truth in its columns. The point is that it had such a confidence as made it feared by any man who did not have English interests at heart. Mr. Gladstone was most of the time on the other side of things from the *Times*, but he bore testimony over and over to the fact that he would receive at the hands of the *Times*

always an absolutely fair treatment, and that whatever it did say of him would be true, though its judgment might be severe upon the facts. Of course that is not up-to-date journalism. But one sometimes feels that it has advantages over the journalism which gives you an issue every few hours and fixes its headlines so that they have no connection with the news below.

Thus the Word of God and social life both lay stress upon truthfulness. Society would fall to pieces if there were lies enough to shatter as there are enough to shake confidence. It would fall to pieces if confidence were not constantly reëstablished by the fact that truth is told under such severe strain, and that for the most part every man hears truth from his neighbour. That leads to some observations regarding types of falsehood or untruthfulness which must be avoided. There is what may be called a temperamental untruthfulness. Some men see certain things entirely out of proportion. They exaggerate without meaning to do it. It is ordinarily in the interests of egotism. Everything that occurs within their experience somehow groups in their thought around themselves. They become the chief actors in every scene. So they become habitually false. But because they are temperamentally untruthful their friends come to discount everything that they say, and they are not so dangerous as the telling might indicate.

There is then what may be called an unconscious untruthfulness. It grows out of pride of opinion, out of the lust of some men to be authoritative on many points. They love to pretend wide acquaintance with public men, or with the events of other people's lives. As a matter of fact, they know very little, but they have a great power of inference, and on very small foundation they can build a large structure of opinion. A fortnight ago an incident came to my knowledge. There is a very prominent clergyman in this country about whom naturally stories get started. Most men who have heard them have simply set them aside as liable to be told about any man in his peculiar position. But one man who loves to be authoritative at last told them, claiming to have definite knowledge that they were true and giving the sources of his information. It was in that form that they came finally to my friend's ears. When he pinned the teller of the stories down he found he had no more information than any other man had. His supposed sources of information were pure falsehood. He had only told what other men had told to him, and he was unconscious of being untruthful. He thought he had a right to refer to the sources of the tale which they had given. But it was only fair that he should be held to severe account, and it is my strong impression that he will speak more guardedly for a time at least. There are some men

who believe evil gladly. They enjoy an adverse story. Witness the eagerness with which a slander is received. We do not mean to be untruthful, but we have strong lust for knowing more than some one else knows, and especially for being able to discount the opinions of other people.

Once I asked a minister if he had heard a certain adverse thing about another man. He replied, "No, I hadn't heard that, but I heard this about him the other day," and he told me a perfectly delightful story of some fine trait in the man. And though I fear the thing which I was enquiring about may be true, I cannot find myself much interested in it because of the better thing which I know is true, and which goes far to offset the evil. Now such experiences as that are too infrequent. More frequently far have I been speaking favourably of some one, only to have another man either look consciously at me as much as to say that he knew a great deal of the other side, or else have him after a while say, "Well, that is all right, but if you knew him as well as I do you would know this and that thing." We take up part of the truth and state it as though it were all. There is a hard word that can be said and we use it as though it were the only word that could be said. We do not mean to be untruthful, but we start the stories which ruin our neighbours.

Then there are men who are selfishly and will-

fully untruthful. A man never tells a lie without some purpose. The purpose ordinarily is something connected with himself. It is for the gaining of his own advantage. He lies about his business. He lies about his plans. He lies about his whereabouts. And every lie is for the sake of avoiding some consequence of his own misdeed, or an evil which he fears may come upon him, or to gain some advantage which he thinks he can gain in this way only. The typical outstanding case in the New Testament, which has become classical, that of Ananias and his wife, comes plainly under this classification. Barnabas had sold all his property and had put all the money into the common fund, and thereby naturally gained a great deal of favour from the people. Ananias wanted the reputation which Joseph had but he wanted it at a cut-rate. He therefore sold all his property also, and gave it out that he was putting all of it in the common fund. As a matter of fact he had withheld some of it. He had a perfect right to do so, but he had no right to claim the favour of the church on the ground of having done otherwise. He has become the typical liar of Christian history, because he did what is done every hour of the day in our own city. He simply lied to gain personal advantage. He was caught in the lie and stricken for it. Something falls dead in every man, part of his finer nature, part of his higher life, when

he follows the example of Ananias. There are men living this day who are morally dead and decaying, though they walk upright, because they have lied and God has stricken them.

So far we have dealt with definite falsehood. It is quite impossible, however, to escape the perennial question, Is a lie ever justifiable? Are there conditions under which a falsehood becomes necessary and right? I do not forget the cases which can be imagined when I say that in actual life, and apart from imagined cases, a lie admitted to be a lie is never either necessary or justifiable. I do not forget that there are times when we may differ as to what constitutes a lie. What measure, for example, of concealment is justifiable, we might discuss. When once we see a lie as a lie, then on the ground of pure morals and a safe social life, it must be condemned. I do not now enter into the two great departments where this matter is most complicated. Either of them would deserve long discussion. First there is the legal department. How far is a lawyer justified in concealing facts which have come to him in the confidence of his position? How far is he justified in defending from penalty a man whom he knows to be or has reason to believe guilty? How far has he right to bring evidence to prove a thing which he knows is not true? Only this is it fair to say in this hurried way, that a lawyer has no right to use his skill

or learning to undermine or to overthrow the rights of society, and that he strikes a blow at the very purpose of his profession, which is the gaining and defending of those rights, when he becomes party to the maintaining of a falsehood. The other sphere of wide dispute is in the medical profession. Here is a patient with a hopeless disease. Shall the physician tell him of it or shall he conceal it from him? Well, we may differ about how much or how little he may wisely disclose, but whatever he does disclose we insist shall be true. There may be a great deal of truth which it is wise for him to retain in his own knowledge, which it may not be either right or wise for others to know. We have a right, however, to insist unqualifiedly that whatever he does communicate shall be absolutely truthful.

In business life lying is defended as sometimes necessary. That a large amount of it occurs is sadly true. But it could never be conceived of as a necessity to right relations among men. Let the man who defends his own lying test his defence by applying it to the man who lies to him. It is a mere commonplace to say that every liar makes the road rougher for other business men. No liar helps commercial life. He hinders it. He may think it is necessary for his personal progress. There stand thousands of men to bear testimony that it is not necessary. Certainly it is the greatest hindrance in the commercial life

to-day. Whether it is the misrepresentation of advertising or the false label on goods or the direct falsehood, nothing is more perilous or unnecessary in commercial life.

So is falsehood defended sometimes in society. Are there not times when it is wiser not to tell the truth? The answer to that is most certainly Yes, because there are times when it is wiser not to tell anything. There are some men who hold all their knowledge so loosely that the opening of their mouths lets all of it out. That is neither wise nor necessary. There are times when men may be told directly or indirectly that the thing which they are enquiring about is none of their business. There are other ways whereby the truth may be reserved. This much, however, must be said most earnestly, that whatever is communicated in society between man and man must be the truth so far as it is anything, and that where interests are involved and truth may properly be claimed the whole truth must then be told at any cost. It all turns on the question whether there is anything more important to society than truth. Try to lay your finger on the thing which is more important. If in a given instance, you point out that kindness is more important than truth, then the question is whether the kindness to an individual which might be manifested in a lie is not a greater unkindness to society whose foundations are thereby attacked.

The effect of falsehood, even kindly intended falsehood, on society is certainly thoroughly bad. So you would discover if you follow out any other alternative to truth. We are suffering from the decay of society, at the top, by reason of its conventions, and shams, and make-believes. Nothing would be better for what we call "society" than to force its people for one whole day to tell the truth. The apostle is right in saying that it is when we speak the truth in love that the true Christian society grows up. No one lie will be enough to protect a friend in case one wants to be kind to him. That is a wise old saw, that a lie has one leg; that is, no one lie can ever get along alone. It always takes two or three to help the one that was thought to be essential. If we feel it our duty to be untrue at one point, we are at once led into a maze, and we lay ourselves liable to the entire lack of confidence of our fellows. If we think it justifiable to lie under some conditions, who shall prove that we will not count it justifiable under others?

Set over against this commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," that other commandment, given double authority by the Lord Himself, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We say sometimes that we hold our neighbour's life in our hands. It is always true that we hold his character on the tips of our tongues. We can tell loose lies or

half truths which would ruin many a man whom we know. If we love him as ourselves, we will treasure his character. We will seek to live the honest life ourselves, and willingly believe good of our fellows and willingly allow the evil to die as a story will die if it be not retold. Without a tale bearer no story goes far. It would be well for society if each of us would count himself a crematory of malicious stories, letting them be burned up in the heat of our love for our neighbour. In that way malicious stories would soon cease to be told. They would find no one to carry them. And we shall come out into that better time when we bear only true testimony of our neighbours. The truth hurts no man. It may be adverse to our neighbour, but it will be true and at the end the truth will be good for him, good for us, good for society.

XI

PRESENT DAY CONTENTMENT

(*The Tenth Commandment*)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.—EXODUS 20 : 17.

WHICH stands like a final word before the audience departs,—belongs there also. For it is in some ways the key commandment. Kept in the heart, all the others are easier to keep. Violated in the heart, the way is open for the violation of each of the others. That is literally true. It would be possible to take each commandment and show how its violation is made likelier and easier by the violation of this law. Palpably that would appear in the commandments which just precede it. Stealing—what is it but the covetous demand for one's self of that which is another's? Murder—how does it come, save from the covetous unwillingness of the offender to take his place in proper relation to the offended? False witness—whence does it issue, save from covetous readiness to deny to the other his fair rights? Wrapped up in this commandment lie the possibilities of the violation of all the others.

Here is notably a command of the heart. The decalogue begins with such a command. A man may walk the ways of the religious world, seeming loyal to the one true God, and in his hidden heart violate with every step the first commandment, having many other gods before Him whom he outwardly and visibly worships. So may a man walk the ways of the earth among his fellow men, smiling and serene, and hate them for their superiority to him, may go with unruffled countenance, and yet have the canker of discontent and covetousness in his heart. If I lift my hand to strike you to your death, all men shall know it, but who shall know if I am hot and restless against you for your superiority to me, who shall know how I long to reach to your height and drag you down that I may take your place, who shall know if I be not eaten out with covetousness? So subtle is the commandment. Its violation begins in the heart and remains there. If it works out into the visible life immediately another commandment must be broken.

Observe the wording itself. Here is the list of things which distinguish a man—his house, his wife, his servants, his beasts of burden, his possessions. Each marks some distinguishing fact in his life. In the word regarding his wife there is the whole dispute about social standing—a dispute which has so disgraced our modern life, a dispute which underlies in large part our

shameful divorce crimes. In the word regarding his house, there lies the dispute of modern life regarding external appearances. In each of the others is some hint of our present life of unrest and discontent. It is striking that when the people came to the forerunner of Jesus and asked what they should do to prepare themselves for the Kingdom of God, the answer to one whole group was that they should be content with such things as they have. It is a word needed quite as truly in our day. The Kingdom of God will not come in the unrest and nervous antagonism of the present day. So long as class is jealous of class, so long as man hates man for his rising above himself, the Kingdom must wait. It is fair question whether the power of having one commandment fully kept would not accomplish more in securing the observance of this than of any other one.

The sin forbidden is itself a biassing one. The covetous man never sees quite straight, never quite understands himself or his neighbour. A flood of light is thrown upon the situation in which Jesus was found when it is remarked that the Pharisees opposing Him were at heart covetous, money lovers. The narrowing of eye to see the marks on the coins had unfitted them for that large vision which would enable them to understand a life like Christ's. He demanded too wide an angle for their vision. And as they did not

understand Him so they could not understand themselves. They were honest, these Pharisees, as honest with Jesus as men inherently dishonest could be. Their very covetousness and miserliness had given them that twist of vision which set them at a wrong angle themselves, and made any true knowledge of Him impossible. Such men there are still, men who sneer at generosity, men who have no power remaining to understand large-heartedness. In a group of men attention was called to the phenomenon, rather remarkable for us laymen, that business of a certain class tends to come together in a city, one whole street devoting itself to linen goods, another to clothing, another to this or that. Such houses tend to concentrate in a locality. The group discussed why it should be so, themselves men in the lines of business involved. One suggested that it was because thus they could be of help to each other, one firm supplying the lacks of another, one house aiding in filling the orders of another, and making possible a coöperation which would be helpful. There was little short of a sneer from the others in the group. To them the case was simple; it was that thus a customer seeking one store might find his way into another, and the second win his custom from the first; it was because one house might lack supply for a customer, who would seek it in another house, and might thereby be drawn away from the first. At

least one hearer looked on and heard the discussion with keen interest. A mere tyro in the reading of faces might have known beforehand what would be the answer of each. In the keen serpent eyes of the second group of men there was that cunning which made it impossible to understand the largeness of purpose of those who held the former view. They were again Pharisees, money lovers, trade seekers, who were covetous and would ruin another for their own advancement. No wonder they could not understand the larger purposes which appeared for a moment before them. No more do they understand themselves. They count themselves normal types of men. Eaten out at heart with covetousness, they count it sure that all men are like themselves, hollow-hearted, self-seeking.

How binding the sin is and how long it keeps its hold, Browning hints in the poem in which he describes the bishop's ordering of his tomb at Saint Praxed's. "Old Gandolf" had been jealous of the bishop in the very earliest experiences of their lives. He had sought to take his niche for burial. He had erected his tomb. Now the bishop would erect such a tomb as would turn the eyes of all men from "Old Gandolf." It should be of such beauteous stone, so richly ornate, that as men came in they would not know whether "Old Gandolf" had ever been buried there, save to pity him in the greatness and splendour of his

rival's tomb. So does covetousness help men to reach across the grave and work out their petty ill will.

Involved in the commandment is the plea for neighbourliness as the foundation of society. Well if that neighbourliness rises to the height of brotherliness, coming thereby to the full Christian plea for the other man and his rights. Around this all society grows. The trail of the sin of covetousness through history is in every case like the trail of the serpent in Paradise, the trail which leads straight on to ruin. Let covetousness have its way and it will wreck society, as the way of the serpent led out through the gates of Paradise. Joseph's brethren would have hindered the purpose of God if they could. Korah, Dathan and Abiram would have broken down the system of worship whereby Moses and Aaron stood at the summit if only they could. Achan would have destroyed the newly organized nation if he had had his way. Ahab would have ruined the kingdom, did indeed strike a deathblow at it and at the whole system of law that underlay it, when he lay that day face to the wall pouting like a spoiled child over Naboth's unwillingness to work his designs. In the whole life of Jesus, there are few more tragic hours than that wherein His disciples James and John revealed their misunderstanding of His kingdom. They longed for the highest places themselves.

We may not well spend all our strength of condemnation upon them. We may well remember also that the protest of the other disciples against them was not a protest of meekness, but the feeling that there was no more reason why they should have the high place than these others. It would have relieved the tragedy if the other disciples had quietly withdrawn from any contest. Rather, they follow behind their Master, whose face is set towards Jerusalem and the Cross, contending who shall be greatest in the kingdom. Each has its own little claim which he sets up. Neither can brook the claim of the other to the high place. It is a tragedy, so far have they missed the purpose of their Master. It is the nearest to a break in the newly formed church that occurred. So, in the early days of the growing church, when Barnabas the just has lavished himself and all his possessions upon the struggling community and has won from them the favour which such an act requires, Ananias looks on with covetous eyes, seeks the same high place, seeks it that Barnabas may not stand alone in it, but seeks it without full cost to himself, would climb to Barnabas' height without Barnabas' struggle. Time fails to follow the history. Only this is sure, that discontent, readiness to injure the other for one's own sake, desire to have for one's self what is another's is a trail of ruin through the history of the church and of the world.

Here is no blow at honest ambition to advance. After all has been said that can be thought of ambition as a curse, after Napoleon has walked the stage to reveal to us the shame and pity of it, there yet remains word to be said of the God-sent blessing of ambition, of desire for success. There would still be the figure of the Premier of England in his schooldays, struggling with his mathematics, and vowing that he would yet become master of its intricacies, and reaching finally the goal where he could talk his budget with an eloquence which no other man has equalled in British history. Ambition—men are ruined without it quite as truly as by means of it. Lives of great men are meant to remind us that we may make our lives sublime. Some things are written in history, and also in personal life, for our example, to arouse in us an overpowering ambition that we may become what other men have become. The vision of greatness and strength ought to make our own littleness and weakness less joyous to us, ought to inspire us to increasing greatness and strength ourselves. All this is vastly different from the sin of the law. As I see my fellow yonder on the heights which he has attained, while I am still below, what shall be my feeling? By the light on his face, I can tell that his vision is wider than mine. Would I snatch him down that I might have the height which he occupies? Then I am covetous and a

sinner against my God and my race. Would I stand beside him, sharing his vision, strengthening him in his vision, aiding him perhaps to higher place because I stand where he has stood? As I climb, would I reach down and lift the lower man up? Then I am brother to my race and servant to my God. Of all the poems of Matthew Arnold, I doubt if one is finer than that which he has called "Rugby Chapel," in which he meditates upon his great father. He describes him as one who was climbing the mountainside to reach the summit with its glorious outlook. He has gone by perilous ways, many times has barely escaped the avalanche. He has walked with careful step along the edge of many a precipice. He has clambered over rough boulders, walking softly lest the tottering stone be started by his step, and he has reached the summit. There is a glad welcome waiting him from others who have reached the summit before him. But he has not come alone. As he has climbed the weary way, he has found many a weaker one who could not clamber over the boulders save by his help, who would have been swept away by the avalanche if he had not snatched them back, who would have fallen from the dizzy precipice had not his guiding hand given new vision. He reaches the summit, but not alone. He gains the height, but others rest with him as he rests. Is not this ambition? aye, verily, ambition which

starts a man Godward, but which drags no man down that he may rise, which will not make of other men stepping-stones for him to climb. Another sin it is which this commandment seeks to kill, the sin which blots and stains our present life, commercial and social.

Sometimes it appears in the matter of possessions. There is the unrest of business life. It is not what we have that makes us discontented. It is what we have not and another has. No man is discontented for the thing which no one has about him. If no one had a marble house, there might be men seeking it, but no man would be restless and hot of heart for lack of it. If no one drove his fast running machines, there might be men planning for and presently owning them, but no man would be despoiling his employer or his trusted friends for the sake of owning one. It is not that we have not enough; it is that our neighbour has more, and we cannot be content while he surpasses us. That he has greater possessions and greater pleasure than we might well give us joy. Rather it gives us pain, and we strike out in a hot race to overcome him and defeat him if may be. We have enough until he appears with more. So we reach out to ruin him in business lines. The moral life of the people has protested against the ethics of much modern business. They have called it "cutting of throats," "throttling of trade," and they are

right. Great industries have fallen into the hands of a few merciless men who have had superb chance to build up a great and general prosperity, but who were not willing that another should continue to prosper while they might perhaps gain his business and his prosperity for themselves. They have demanded that other men become subordinate to them, that other men take second place to their enterprise; so they have risen to their heights on the wrecks of other men. Their business has come to its strength by the ruin of other business. It is the blot and shame of our commercial system—covetousness.

Sometimes it appears in the matter of standing among men, what we know as success in any chosen line. Perhaps its shame is keenest here. There are men even preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ who cannot bear to be surpassed by other men. Let a man come to some fame or popularity, let the crowds follow him, let his name appear in the papers, and there are men who are ready to sneer quietly, and to pass their innuendos regarding him, declaring him a mountebank or a caterer to public follies, anything save that he has a secret of power which they have not themselves. No man in the church or state makes great success that there are not men ready to point out the defects in his life, and to make it out that he is unworthy the place he has gained. The statesman of Washington's day

points to the portrait of Washington and says, "That blockhead made his fortune by keeping his mouth shut." Abraham Lincoln is reviled and contemned by men in themselves not worthy to do the menial tasks of his household because they envy him his place and power. Spurgeon wins men by the thousands, and small-dimensioned churchmen point the finger of scorn at him, envious, though they know it not, as the Pharisees of Jesus' day knew not their covetousness. Much criticism of the present day is vitiated by the same evil. A new poet appears—will other poets open their arms to him? A new artist is discovered—what will his brothers say of him? A new essayist appears—we watch the review of the volume with keen interest. Will a man's brothers recognize him, or must he fight his way like a Browning, or a Millet, or a Thoreau? Aye, it is a subtle sin, this. Few men know its hold upon them, but as we find ourselves measuring other men we discover the roots of it in ourselves, and find it hard to be generous and fair to the man who in the eyes of our fellows surpasses us. We would fain draw him down because he stands higher than we. He preaches to larger companies than ourselves. He is far more talked of than are we. We will stain his name if we have a chance. We will pour on him our contempt. We will assume a superiority which in our hearts we know we do

not deserve. His legal practice is larger than ours. We have convenient names for him which we can use with clients. He has more patients in his medical practice than have we. If we were charlatans, so might we have larger practice. And so it goes on—to our increasing shame, the blot on our social system—covetousness.

Sometimes even it appears in the innermost recesses of the spiritual life. Men in the presence of God's saints on earth, whose very holiness condemns themselves, find easy fault with them, point out this defect or that, in the effort to keep their lives from appearing so fine as they have appeared; speak their words in undertones regarding them, that thus their own lives may not be so condemned. Covetousness, all of it; miserable envy, every whit. Over against it, how splendid is the Spirit of Christ—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. For in this, His second commandment, there lies the secret of the cure of the sin of covetousness, a cure which will lead us to rejoice in the advancement of our brother, which will lead us to reach a helping hand to him, each standing for the other, each glorying in the prosperity and blessing of the other, and each inspired to larger endeavour by the success vouchsafed to the other.

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